



SATHYA SAI ***Newsletter, USA***

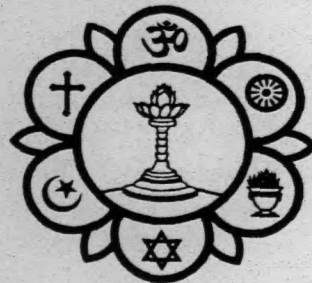
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Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

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

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*The Sarva Dharma symbol, the logo of the Sri Sathya Sai Organization,
depicts the unity of all religions.*



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—Barbara Bozzani, Editor

Sai's Message



What exactly is the underlying cause of all conflicts and confusions that afflict the world today? The institutions imparting learning have succeeded in equipping mankind with fantastic skills. Look at the fields of atomic engineering or of space exploration and conquest in which mankind has achieved astounding feats. But, in actual daily life, these feats have not resulted in peace, happiness and harmony. Castes, classes and races clash with each other with unremitting hate. Even students and youth have taken to this dangerous course. The situation is fast becoming beyond control. . . .

Education can yield peace and prosperity only when, along with technical skills and objective information, students are equipped with moral ideals, righteous living and spiritual insight.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. XV, pages 75-76

Sai's Message

Education and Teaching Human Values

*The teacher is one who,
by removing narrow-mindedness,
helps to develop world peace
and teaches equal mindedness.*

—Sathya Sai Baba

In this physical and transient world, teachers have to be familiar with all the affairs happening in the world and, in turn, pass on this knowledge to the students under their guidance. Of all the ages, in this *Kali Yuga*,* several easy techniques have been adopted. The *Kali Yuga* is ideal for the redemption of mankind. There is an abundance of knowledge available. In this *Kali Age* we find thousands and thousands of colleges, and hundreds and hundreds of universities that have been established for learning. There are also many easy techniques available to earn money. In spite of all these conveniences, people have no peace or happiness, and they are restless. What is the reason for this? Only when teachers recognize and practice this truth, our goals will be fully realized.

In this world, some feel money is strength. Some feel that education is strength. Others feel that the power of intellect is real strength. The power of wealth, the power of education, and the power of intellect are only signs of weakness, not of strength.

**Kali Yuga*, literally means age of iron; it connotes a very difficult time in the history of mankind. This age in which we live is the *Kali Yuga*.

**lakh, one hundred thousand; lakhs and lakhs would therefore be hundreds of thousands.

Character

It is only character that provides real strength. Along with character, it is good behavior that will take people to an exalted position. In spite of all modern conveniences, people have no peace or security. The reason for this is because of the bad behavior of mankind. There is a wide scope for peace and happiness if there is virtue and good behavior. Education without character is like a fruit without juice or a cow that does not yield milk. There are hundreds of educated people in this world, thousands of people with scholarship, lakhs and lakhs** of people with intelligence and many wealthy people. In spite of all this, the world is put through so much suffering and misery because of the lack of character and good behavior. The ancient, noble souls kept the peace and security of the world in their minds. The names of such noble souls are imprinted indelibly in the hearts of *Bharatiyas* (the people of India) even today. What is the reason for this? It is because of their virtue and conduct that we have so much faith in them. Similarly, if today, teachers put into practice what they teach, then they can be ideal examples in society. Precepts without practice will not bring about change in this world.

A teacher is a shining light to the world, but only if this light is shining all

the time will it be able to light up other lamps. If one student misbehaves, only one person's conduct is spoiled; but, if one teacher misbehaves, it will ruin the conduct of many students. Thus, it is teachers who are responsible for the misconduct of the present generation of students. The teachers may be teaching very well—they may be explaining thoroughly and showing easy methods for learning—but if they do not put into practice what they are teaching, explaining and showing, then, nobody is going to follow or respect them.

Governments or individuals may spend a substantial amount of money to teach human values, but it does not take hold. Human values cannot be obtained by reading texts, cannot be supplied by a company, cannot be obtained as gifts, nor can values be bought in a market. They are a natural outpouring from the heart. Human values are innate from birth; they are called EHV. EHV means Education in Human Values. What is education? Is it mere scholarship? No. Education is not merely knowledge obtained from books. It is action.

Values are Natural

The real meaning of EHV is human values put into practice. What are these human values? People simply utter the names of human values—*sathya*, *dharma*, *shanti*, *prema*, *ahimsa*—this comes only from the lips. But, true human values come from birth. *Sathya*, truth, is that which has to be said. *Dharma*, righteousness, is that which has to be practiced. *Shanti*, peace, is that which has to be experienced. *Prema*, love, is our true nature. *Ahimsa*, nonviolence, is staying away from violence.

All these values are natural to human beings. One who has all these is a true person and is endowed with the qualities of love, compassion, forbearance, sympathy, truth and sacrifice. On the other hand, anger, hatred, jealousy, ego and pride are animal qualities. Whenever people get angry, they should say, "I am not an animal." Animals are not jealous, but human beings exhibit a great deal of jealousy.

Swami is delighted to watch wild animals in the forest. One animal does not feel jealous of another animal because it is more beautiful, powerful or has a higher position. But, human beings have jealousy even in small matters. When one constructs a two-storey house, the neighbor feels jealous. If one gets promoted, other people feel jealous. If animals don't have jealousy, how then can you call yourself a human being when you feel jealous? One should have faith and assert that one is a human being, not an animal. Only then can you get rid of bad qualities and develop human values. If you have animal qualities in your heart, how can you talk about human values?

Teachers Earn Respect

Look at a glass filled with water. Unless you pour out the water, you cannot fill it with another kind of liquid. Today, people have filled their hearts with bad qualities. Unless they pour out all these bad qualities, how can they fill their hearts with human values? Everybody is treading the path of untruth without any idea of righteousness or real love. The love they have is artificial. They have no heart at all. If they are living artificial lives, how can they develop human values? Therefore, teachers must first

cleanse their hearts and get rid of their impurities, then fill their hearts with pure, steady, selfless love and divine qualities. Merely teaching some scriptural verses cannot be called Education in Human Values. Teachers must examine themselves to verify whether they are practicing what they are teaching. Teachers tell students to speak the truth, but they themselves utter many lies. How can they expect students to learn to practice truth? Teachers are like water tanks. Only when they fill the tank with pure water, will they give pure water when the tap is opened. Teachers can be compared to water tanks, and students are like taps; therefore, keep the tanks clean and pure.

A teacher must be prepared for sacrifice. By sacrifice alone, one attains immortality. Teachers today do not have any idea of sacrifice; they claim they are sacrificing because they are teaching. In reality, however, they are taking money for their work. How can that be called sacrifice? That is not sacrifice, it is deceit. Everyone should examine themselves to see if they are doing the right amount of work for the salary they are receiving. Everyone wants a big salary but less work. People have many ambitions but do not put forth the effort. That is why the country is in a sad state.

Teachers should have steady minds; they are like guideposts. Only when the guidepost is steady and firmly fixed can it properly guide the travelers. On the other hand, if the guidepost is not fixed properly and is unsteady, it would misguide the travelers. Therefore, teachers should have steady minds; only then will

they have the authority to teach the students. Today, students are very intelligent and vigilant. They observe to what extent the teachers are practicing what they teach. The teachers will earn the respect and courtesy of the students, only when they practice what they teach. If teachers do not practice, the students will never respect them or follow their commands. Teachers are themselves responsible for the students' lack of respect toward them. So, follow this concept: First be, next do, then tell—this is what we must all uphold.

Hard Working Teachers

In the Sathya Sai Organization many teachers are working hard. Unfortunately, they do not have proper guidance. If you ask them what human values are, they simply utter—*sathya, dharma, shanti, prema, ahimsa*. They do not understand the inner significance of those values. They think nonviolence, *ahimsa*, means not physically harming others. It is not only that. Nonviolence implies not hurting anyone through the five senses—seeing bad things, hearing bad words, having bad thoughts and doing bad actions—all are considered to be violent.

- *See no evil, see what is good.*
- *Hear no evil, hear what is good.*
- *Think no evil, think what is good.*
- *Say no evil, say what is good.*
- *Do no evil, do what is good.*
- *This the way to God.*

How can you talk about nonviolence when you indulge in bad thoughts, bad talk, bad actions, listen to bad sounds or see bad actions? These are all reflections of animal qualities.

What is the real meaning of truth or *sathya*? People think that reporting facts exactly as they are seen or heard is truth. Truth should satisfy your conscience. In the name of truth, you utter many blatant lies. Truth is God, keep that in mind. Whatever you speak should be the word of God. Thus, one should teach the true meaning of these human values rather than merely repeating their names. Otherwise, it does not sink into the hearts of the students and may actually cause them harm. Teachers and others take pride in claiming that they teach human values to thousands of students. This is of no use, unless it is done properly. That is why the world is in such a sad state.

Teach with Love

Oh, Teachers, Embodiments of Love! All who are involved in teaching human values should have proper conduct. You have been teaching human values so long, but how many students have you trained properly? It is enough, if each teacher trains 10 students properly. Sai wants only quality, not quantity. It is enough, if you have even 10 good students. First, teachers should experience, then practice, then teach. You are all working with a lot of sincerity, but you do not have satisfaction. What is the reason? It is due to a lack of proper guidance. If there is proper guidance, you can accomplish any amount of work. In the Sathya Sai Or-

ganization, there are millions of good workers. You don't find that many workers in other organizations.

Spend as much time with the students as possible, and teach them with lots of love. Love them as you would your own children. From childhood, teach them to tell the truth and to never utter lies.

*"Teachers are like water tanks.
Only when they fill the tank with
pure water will they give pure
water when the tap is opened."*

Parents Need EHV, Too

There is yet another problem: Even though teachers do their best, parents are spoiling children at home. Students listen faithfully to their teachers' words and are determined to tell the truth. But, when the student goes home, he sees his parents relaxing in the living room and joins them. Meanwhile, the phone rings. The student answers the phone and tells his father that a friend is calling. His father then makes him say that he is not at home. Thus, parents force their children to tell lies! Nowadays, parents are 99% responsible for spoiling their children. Today, parents support whatever their children wish to do. For example, if the son comes home and tells the father that the ox (neutered bull) has given birth, immediately, the father asks, "What is the sex of the calf?" Whatever his son says, he believes, however ignorant, wicked or useless his son's information may be. Such fathers may be called the brothers of the blind king, Dhritrashtra (father of the wicked Kaurava brothers depicted in the *Mahabharatha* narrative).

Please turn to page 31

We Learn from Nature, Too

This fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter flying along in a "V" formation, you might be interested in knowing that scientists have discovered why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following.

By flying in a V formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

Basic truth #1: People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on each other's thrust.

Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front.

Basic truth #2: If we take a tip from the geese, we will stay in formation with those who are headed the same way we

are going. When the lead goose gets tired, he rotates to the back, and another goose flies at the point of the V.

Basic truth #3: It pays to take turns doing hard jobs with people as it is for geese flying south.

Basic truth #4: We respond to encouragement from others. The geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

When a goose gets sick or is wounded by gunshot and falls out of formation, two geese fall out with him and follow him down to help and protect him. They stay with that goose until he is either able to fly or until he is dead. Only then will they launch out on their own with another formation to catch up with their flock which has moved on.

Final truth: If we follow the example of the geese, we will stand by each other in the same way.

Excerpted from *Parent Line*
Indiana Department of Education.

The Legend of the Geese Teaches Common Unity

People sometimes ask, "What is community?" We might respond, "People working together to make our neighborhoods better places in which to live and work." Another response might be, "People sharing a common goal or vision." Or, as the word implies, it is common unity, "community."

In our ideal community, we might look for a place where we get encouragement

and support from others when we face tough times. In the Sai community, our common unity is Baba, and we see him in each other. We are One. But even with a firm knowledge of this, sometimes it helps if we take the example of flying like the geese. We were all born in this lifetime with many God-given talents and abilities. Recognizing these abilities in our fellow devotees is important. Allow them to take the lead at the fly point.

It's important to encourage each other, to recognize our strengths, to work as a team, to alternate leadership, thus strengthening our community.

Baba's master plan for making each of us and our community more healthy is through deep-rooted faith, not only in him, but in ourselves, having self-confidence plus self-realization. We are the embodiments of Divine Love. Let's travel on each other's thrust and stay in formation. This is most helpful when we have to overcome those moments of disorientation.

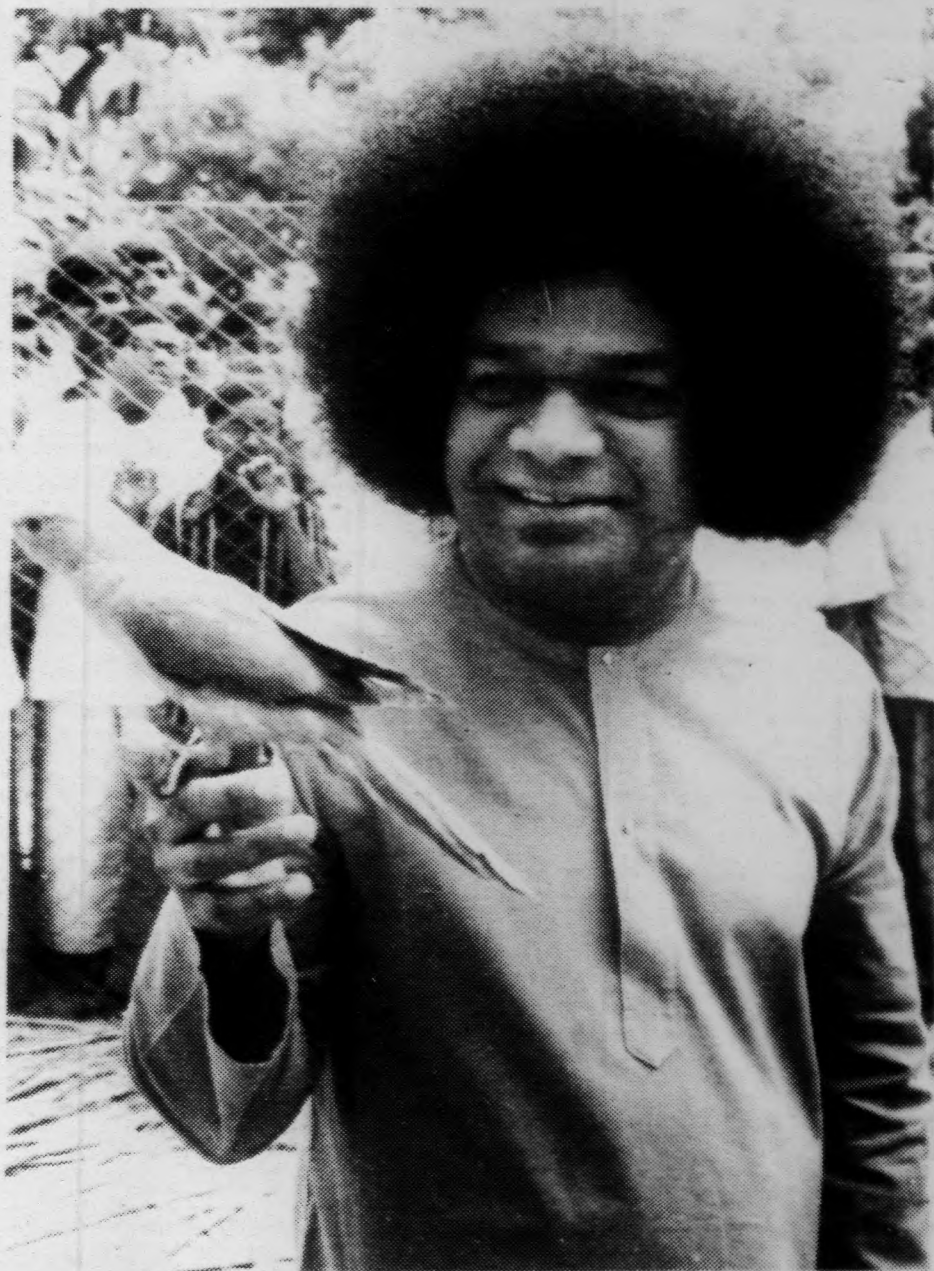
Flying alone in the short term may be appealing. But for the long journey of our lives, flying, working, living, serving—always with common unity—will carry us much further.

—Patty DiFazio
Middle Haddam, Connecticut



We saw lions, leopards, cheetahs, zebras, buffaloes, giraffes—in fact all species of wildlife. If one observes all these wild animals living in close collaboration in these areas [of Africa], one is filled with pity at the human species which has lost the qualities of mutual help and loving cooperation. These animals are friendly with each other. They drink from the same pool. They eat together. One species is the comrade of another. We found representatives of what are called natural enemies caressing each other. They were teaching man a lesson in social and spiritual behavior. Divinity was evident, clear and pure, in every one of them.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Excerpted from a letter to Dr. Gokak,
written from Kampala, Africa, 1968



Practicing Sai's Teachings

It was my sixth trip to see Sathya Sai Baba. In a worldly sense, it went very smoothly; I used to believe that was a sign of grace. However, I no longer view the good as receiving grace, and the bad as not receiving grace. It has been my experience that both are equally beneficial for me.

This trip was different from my previous trips in that my focus was far more internal. In the past, I would sit in the lottery line hoping for a low number. Once in the *darshan* area, I would pray fervently to Swami to come near me, take my letters or call me for an interview. During this trip, I tried not to pay attention to what number I received. While waiting for *darshan*, I would keep my mind still and focused. If desires for personal attention arose, I would observe them and let them go. I was also far less judgmental of myself on this trip. On previous trips, I had felt very unworthy to be around Baba.

One afternoon, a woman scolded the ladies for chatting before *darshan*. She said, "You should be preparing to see Divinity." This line often resounds in my mind. We need not be only in India to prepare to see Divinity; it is in and around us at all times. Every moment of our lives, we should always be preparing to see Divinity.

This past year, I have been teaching *Bal Vikas**. This triggered some of my deepest issues of self-confidence. Foster-

ing high self-esteem in the children is one of the goals of *Bal Vikas*. I struggled with how I could raise their self-esteem when mine was so shaky. I put these questions and problems in Swami's hands and tried to let myself experience my own innate Divinity when I taught. In time it somehow became easier, and I gradually did begin to feel better about myself. What had begun as difficult and forced, soon became habitual, pleasant and even comfortable.

When I saw Sai Baba this summer, the old feelings of self-doubt did not ever come up. If he didn't look at me during *darshan*, I didn't worry that it was because I was not a good person. I was much more confident and, therefore, no longer needed his external approval.

Our group was called for two interviews. In the first interview, Baba asked several Americans how their boyfriends or girlfriends were. He then criticized western culture. He said that having boyfriends and girlfriends is not good. He said that all boys should be like your brothers, and all girls like your sisters. Baba said that if you like someone, you should get married; friendship [between boys and girls] is not good. People are friends one day, but not the next. Sai then explained how shallow many friendships are, saying that if you have money, you have friends. If you have no money, then no friends. He added, "*God is not like that; God is your only true friend.*"

**Bal Vikas* is the system of education for children of Sai devotees and is usually taught in the Sathya Sai Baba Centers.

Just before the end of the interview, I asked him for permission to write a dissertation on EHV (Education in Human Values), Baba paused and asked me if I was a teacher. Then he told me that EHV is 3HV—Head, Heart and Hands. He told me that there are three kinds of teachers—those who complain are the lowest, those who explain are in the middle, but those who inspire are the best. EHV is not just words like *sathya*, *dharma*, *shanti*, *prema* and *ahimsa*, but actions. I understand this more deeply as I see that it is not my EHV lessons which transform my students as much as my actions. It is the unconditional love that I give them, and the example that I set.

Sai continued by telling us that everything is God; God is everywhere; love is everywhere. He said, "*The purpose of studying is to steady the mind.*" He continued by saying, "*We are not the body; we are God. Some people think we are the body; others think we are the mind. We are really God.*"

In the second interview, he said, "*Peace is within. Outside is pieces, pieces, pieces.*" He told us not to make a distinction between God's work and worldly work. "*All is God's work.*" He spoke disapprovingly about what people

do with their eyes. Some of us interpreted it as Baba not approving of winking. Others thought it meant not having a "roving eye." He said again, "*God is in everyone,*" and pointed to several people saying, "*You are God*" to each of them. At the end of the interview when Sathya Sai Baba handed out *vibuthi* (holy ash), he gave me the exact number of packets that I had given to others from the stash he had given to me three years earlier!

I feel very grateful and even more deeply inspired to practice Sai's teachings. As the number of devotees continues to increase, I know that my chances for physical closeness will not be possible. I feel no sadness at this; I am deeply eager and excited to watch his message spread to more and more people.

Baba's love is the sweetest nectar I have ever experienced. To be attached to his form as the sole source of this love would be a dire mistake. He says that if we take one step toward him, he will take 100 steps toward us. If we sincerely and earnestly do our *sadhana* (spiritual practices), follow our conscience and his teachings, we will experience his love wherever we may be.

—Leslie Laud
New York, New York



As teachers of Bal Vikas classes throughout the country, you do not look forward to monetary or material benefit. So, you have ample opportunity to make the child's heart and intellect blossom through the rays of love. Let me tell you that most teachers today have specialized in western types of training, so they have lost the moorings of their culture and are unaware of the deeper wellsprings of the spirit. . . Remember, the children who come to you are all heirs to the richest cultural heritage the world can give. They are children of immortality.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. IX, page 2, all editions

Two Lessons in One

Swami is a masterful teacher. He makes us see everything about ourselves. I must admit, it continues to amaze me how many imperfections he manages to show me. Of course, once he points them out, I wonder why I never realized them before. During the morning *darshan* of New Year's Day 1994, Baba gave me two lessons with one experience.

I was in one of the last lines to be seated, stuck in the corner farthest from where Swami walks. I found a vacant chair in that corner and thought to myself, "I might as well sit here. Maybe the person won't come, and I will be able to see something. If someone comes, wherever I end up sitting couldn't be worse than where I would have been." I sat comfortably for about twenty minutes, noticing that the aisles were completely filled up, and there was hardly a space on the ground. At 7:00 A.M., a ripple ran through the crowd. Baba was coming! At exactly the same time from the other direction, an old woman, bent in two, was slowly moving toward my direction. I wasn't sure if this was her chair or not, but I knew I would give her my seat. I immediately got up for her.

Angry voices shouted, "Sit down." "Sit down." "Down." "What does she think she's doing?" "Where are you going?" I tried desperately to find a place to sit, anywhere, to get out of the way. No one would move an inch, but they continued shouting. Finally, I spotted a ditch near a tree and headed in that direction. A woman had her leg stretched out with her foot resting in the ditch; when I in-

dictated that I was going to stoop down while leaning against the tree, she complained bitterly. With great reluctance and an angry look, she removed her foot.

I remained in that painfully cramped position, unable to see Baba, until I was sure he was out of sight from the women's side. Barely able to struggle out of my contorted posture, I began to move again to try and find a seat on the ground. Again voices rose up, "Sit down." "What are you doing?" "She's jockeying for a better position." I couldn't believe the fury against me. Everyone actually believed I was looking for a better place, when I was just looking for any place. Finally, an Indian woman picked up her child and placed her on her lap, giving me a tiny space to squeeze into. I was completely demolished, ready to burst into tears. I had ruined everyone's *darsan*, and everyone had misjudged me.

Controlling my tears I realized, "This has got to be some lesson from Swami. I've never seen so many angry, selfish people all at one time. This must have happened for a reason." By the end of the day, I had two incredible insights:

You cannot judge what motivates a person. No one saw me get up and give my seat to the old woman, so they all assumed that I was selfish in trying to improve my position. Clearly, this was not the case. In the future, I must try to remember that I can only judge my own actions and be responsible for myself. It is impossible to judge the actions of others, because there is no way to know what is motivating them.

Just before leaving for India, I had said to my boss at the hospice where I work as a bereavement coordinator, "All the people I work with are always worried about what their neighbors think about them. I don't understand this." I bragged, "Not me. If I feel I am doing the right thing, I do it. I never worry about what someone will think of me."

What a lesson Swami gave me. I found out with that *darshan* experience just how deeply *I do care* what my Sai sisters think. I was hurt and distraught that they saw me as selfish and self-serving. It is clear that I care what everyone thinks about me, not only my neighbors, but people I don't even know. Painful as this lesson was, it was an important one. Although I have always listened and been supportive of the people I work with, I

never really understood this concern. Now, I do. If this issue is brought up again, I will be able to have real compassion for those I am trying to serve.

How wonderful that Swami makes us see our every impurity. He tells us to WATCH our Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character and Heart. He makes us meticulous witnesses to ourselves. Then he requires that we note our faults, let them go, don't repeat them, and, ultimately, forgive and love ourselves despite our imperfections. Then we can also love others. This is a huge task. But what a wonderful gift to be given—to undergo all these challenges at the feet of our beloved Sai.

—Judy Warner Scher
Faber, Virginia



You must learn tolerance and patience, charity and service. You must determine to seek [these even] after the pilgrimage is over, and sit in your own home ruminating over your experiences.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Speaks Vol. III, Chapter 43



Learning means Atmajnana (Self-knowledge, knowledge of the indwelling Divinity), not the knowledge of things related to the world which trains one for earning a living and is useful on that basis. To compare Atmajnana with such knowledge is a big mistake. Great people are those who do not abuse others, who search for Reality with good intentions.

Spiritual matters cannot be understood by those without the power of discrimination, or by those who are conceited with the authority that they have, or by those who are unaware of any Atmajnana.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sandeha Nivarini, 6th edition, 1975, pages 10-11

A Map to Guide Us

Dr. John Hislop addresses the spiritual issues of appearance versus Changeless Reality, the Path of Devotion, how the Path of Wisdom relates to detachment, etc.

When I visited Calgary and Vancouver in recent years, I found Canadians to be as friendly, as courteous, and as open-minded as were the people I remember from my boyhood in Carstairs, Alberta. But, the less violent, more friendly culture of my fellow Canadians is not enough if one wishes to see appearance as appearance and not mistake changeable appearance for the Changeless Reality.

One's everyday experience is somewhat akin to a person traveling across the shifting sands and superheated air of a desert. In the far distance, there appears to be a body of water, an oasis. Every fiber of one's parched body calls out that one should immediately change course and reach that life-giving water. But before doing so, the wise traveler consults his map of the region to see if there is indeed an oasis at that location. Thus, the wise traveler may at once know if he is seeing an oasis, or if he is seeing a mirage, an appearance without substance. Most certainly, appearance is not always the truth of the matter. As fellow travelers in this world of experiences and mind and the awareness of these, we are in constant danger of being guided by appearance, thereby suffering grievously from our mistakes.

The uncounted billions of persons who are fellow travelers in this world of birth, change and death have no valid map to guide them in their journey from birth

through a panorama of experiences to death, and we are told, then to further embodiments. But, it is so incredible that it is almost unbelievable that we, the few of us, Sai devotees, have a true map that will guide us safely through the terrors of this world to the realization of one's true nature, and thereby liberation from delusion and illusion and attendant misery. That priceless map to guide us safely through the years of body life is Divinity, our Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Baba is willing, lovingly willing to guide his devotees. To help us, Baba has encouraged us to form Sathya Sai Baba Centers, where each week, we can meet with fellow devotees and find delight and inspiration talking with each other about Baba and his teachings.

Baba's teachings fall into two general modes of inquiry and behavior: (1) the Path of Devotion, and (2) the Path of Wisdom. These may appear to be quite far apart as one starts one's search for changeless truth. But actually, as one's inquiry and practice moves forward, one will find that devotion and wisdom merge, one with the other.

Would it be possible to identify a dominant principle of the devotional path and a dominant principle of the wisdom path?

Yes, at least from this writer's viewpoint. But, each traveler on the inner path of Self-inquiry will need to make his or her own test. From this writer's

viewpoint, the dominant principle of the devotional path is the loving of the Divine Baba with all one's heart, and the putting aside of one's apparent separation from him. For this, one needs to constantly fasten one's thought and attention on Baba until the erroneous concept of separation falls away and one knows directly that despite appearances and concepts to the contrary, there is only Baba, only Divinity, and that all else is merely appearance.

Likewise, from the writer's viewpoint, the dominant principle of the wisdom path is detachment. As of now, this writ-

er sees the vital importance of not identifying oneself with that which changes. The flow of experiences is endless change, an endless series of beginnings, middles and terminations. Yet, Oneself continues untouched and unchanged. Thus, as a pilgrim on the path of wisdom, one practices discrimination and detachment without worry as to the final goal, for the mind cannot conceive of the goal, nor the tongue describe it except to repeat what Baba and the ancients say, *"There is peace that passeth all understanding."*

—John H. Hislop, Ed.D.
Chula Vista, California

Dr. Hislop regrets that he cannot answer individual letters. However, questions of general interest will be addressed in future issues of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter*. You are welcome to send your questions for his consideration to this office:

Dr. J. Hislop, % *Sathya Sai Newsletter*, P. O. Box 660908, Arcadia, CA 91066-0908.

Wisdom is the precious ambrosia gathered from all sources of knowledge and all the arts of learning it. It is the sweet, sustaining butter churned and collected from the Sastras (scriptures). Wisdom is not to be defined as the capacity to discriminate and declare, "This is flat," or "This is round. . . ." That is the common belief. This is only knowledge. Next, we have what may be called good knowledge (sujnana), when people are able to distinguish between right and wrong or good and bad, when they can discover, "This activity is for my betterment and the betterment of others." Both jnana and sujnana are confined to the intellect of individuals. There is a stage called vijnana, when the heart is transformed by loyalty to truth, nonviolence and compassion. Such persons can understand their kinship with the cosmos and the Creator of the cosmos. Such persons live in accordance with that understanding, without doubt or disharmony. Ajnana (having no wisdom) breeds sorrow; vijnana confers joy. If people hesitate to call any experience vijnana, let them examine whether it is material or spiritual, and [judge] on the touchstone, "Does it give me unalloyed joy?" and then classify it as such. The yardstick for vijnana is dharma (righteousness). The more dharma is put into practice, the more one gets rooted in vijnana.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Vahini, page 148

A Map to Guide Us

Dr. John Hislop addresses the spiritual issues of appearance versus Changeless Reality, the Path of Devotion, how the Path of Wisdom relates to detachment, etc.

When I visited Calgary and Vancouver in recent years, I found Canadians to be as friendly, as courteous, and as open-minded as were the people I remember from my boyhood in Carstairs, Alberta. But, the less violent, more friendly culture of my fellow Canadians is not enough if one wishes to see appearance as appearance and not mistake changeable appearance for the Changeless Reality.

One's everyday experience is somewhat akin to a person traveling across the shifting sands and superheated air of a desert. In the far distance, there appears to be a body of water, an oasis. Every fiber of one's parched body calls out that one should immediately change course and reach that life-giving water. But before doing so, the wise traveler consults his map of the region to see if there is indeed an oasis at that location. Thus, the wise traveler may at once know if he is seeing an oasis, or if he is seeing a mirage, an appearance without substance. Most certainly, appearance is not always the truth of the matter. As fellow travelers in this world of experiences and mind and the awareness of these, we are in constant danger of being guided by appearance, thereby suffering grievously from our mistakes.

The uncounted billions of persons who are fellow travelers in this world of birth, change and death have no valid map to guide them in their journey from birth

through a panorama of experiences to death, and we are told, then to further embodiments. But, it is so incredible that it is almost unbelievable that we, the few of us, Sai devotees, have a true map that will guide us safely through the terrors of this world to the realization of one's true nature, and thereby liberation from delusion and illusion and attendant misery. That priceless map to guide us safely through the years of body life is Divinity, our Baba, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Baba is willing, lovingly willing to guide his devotees. To help us, Baba has encouraged us to form Sathya Sai Baba Centers, where each week, we can meet with fellow devotees and find delight and inspiration talking with each other about Baba and his teachings.

Baba's teachings fall into two general modes of inquiry and behavior: (1) the Path of Devotion, and (2) the Path of Wisdom. These may appear to be quite far apart as one starts one's search for changeless truth. But actually, as one's inquiry and practice moves forward, one will find that devotion and wisdom merge, one with the other.

Would it be possible to identify a dominant principle of the devotional path and a dominant principle of the wisdom path?

Yes, at least from this writer's viewpoint. But, each traveler on the inner path of Self-inquiry will need to make his or her own test. From this writer's

viewpoint, the dominant principle of the devotional path is the loving of the Divine Baba with all one's heart, and the putting aside of one's apparent separation from him. For this, one needs to constantly fasten one's thought and attention on Baba until the erroneous concept of separation falls away and one knows directly that despite appearances and concepts to the contrary, there is only Baba, only Divinity, and that all else is merely appearance.

Likewise, from the writer's viewpoint, the dominant principle of the wisdom path is detachment. As of now, this writ-

er sees the vital importance of not identifying oneself with that which changes. The flow of experiences is endless change, an endless series of beginnings, middles and terminations. Yet, Oneself continues untouched and unchanged. Thus, as a pilgrim on the path of wisdom, one practices discrimination and detachment without worry as to the final goal, for the mind cannot conceive of the goal, nor the tongue describe it except to repeat what Baba and the ancients say, "*There is peace that passeth all understanding.*"

—John H. Hislop, Ed.D.
Chula Vista, California

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—Sathya Sai Baba
Sathya Sai Vahini, page 148

The Information Superhighway

I do not give speeches; my talks are sambhashana (good counsel). I want you to follow every word of what I say with reverent attention, for your bliss, your joy, is my food. . . . You should listen carefully and take to heart all that I say.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. I, page 15

Dear Brothers and Sisters: In the United States, as all over the world, we have most recently heard the term known as the "Information Superhighway." We, however, as Sai devotees have had this superhighway since we have come to know our beloved Swami. Unfortunately, we sometimes forget that his is the ultimate information superhighway. I have been a devotee for some 15 years. Since that time, I have drawn on Swami's counsel, words and blessings to give me strength to do what I had to do in order to accomplish my life's tasks. The highway that Baba is providing for us is one that will speed us along the road of life to that very destination that he has in mind for each one of us. It is true that other avenues can be taken to reach the destination; but this gift, this superhighway that Sathya Sai Baba has shown us, is a rarity.

If we follow every word that he says, we are sure to accomplish much. The less we care to follow his words, the longer it will take us to arrive at our destination. How sure am I that I'm on the right path speeding along on this Sai superhighway? I humbly pray that I am on the highway to God. I do know, however, that if I had not been a Sai devotee, my life would not be worth much.

Sathya Sai Baba has given innumerable divine discourses on education, self-

less service, human values and spirituality, all dedicated to you and me. Do we listen, or do we pretend to listen, just bouncing his words back and forth and pretending to praise his divine glory? My answer is that we often bounce his words back and forth. It might be better to say less, praise less and do more. As actions speak louder than words, we will then have done our duty.

" . . . You should listen carefully and take to heart all that I say." One fine day I was in the mandir and did just that. Baba walked inside in all of his glory and very softly, yet with firm determination, said about five times, *"Do your duty or get out!"* Who in God's name was he speaking to? I knew that Baba was not speaking to me, or was he? His words had a very profound effect on me. He was speaking to me and you, and everybody who could hear—all who cared to listen, even those who were not in an audible range. No word should go unheard if one can help it. The words that are spoken are packed with very important messages. Often those messages are different for everyone of us who listens to the same words.

I cannot live with myself if my work is not done, or if my duty is not accomplished. The penalty is too great. If I lose Baba, I lose everything that my life

stands for; the very nature of my existence will lose its meaning. I can no longer sit back idly, and expect Swami to simply take care of everything without my participation. I know that if I give 150%, he will kick in whatever it takes to help me get the job done. I, therefore, submit to all of you that you will bring about great accomplishments if you take this approach. The feeling of satisfaction that you can derive is enormous, and most of all, Baba will be pleased with you. Are we doing our life's work to please Baba? Maybe. I would rather think that it is to focus ourselves, so that we can become strong vessels that carry Baba's messages or, rather, put Baba's messages into actions. We are also becoming information superhighways.

We are inherently Divine. In the long run, we are actually no different than

Sai. Realizing this does take some time. We are human beings with a very special job. We are Sai devotees blessed with the silent mission of carrying forth our Father's words—translating those words into venerable actions that do not bring glory unto ourselves, but allow the Lord's wisdom to permeate the world—again, not by mere words, but by true and faithful actions.

Now that I have written all of this, and I have given a point of view, do I follow this? I am learning quickly, and I have no time to waste. This life is Baba's, and I would not have it any other way. I must become an integral part of his Divine Information Superhighway. The possibilities are endless!

—David M. Wolff
Cos Cob, Connecticut



As fog before the sun, ignorance melts away before true knowledge. Knowledge is acquired by uninterrupted inquiry. One should constantly be engaged in the inquiry of the nature of Brahman (Universal Absolute).

All doubts that afflict the mind have to be solved by consulting those who know, or the sadgurus (spiritual teachers) one has the chance to meet. Until one gets firmly fixed on the path that the guru has shown, one has to obey the rules and directions steadfastly and be in their company, or be associated with them one way or another. For, one can progress very fast if one keeps close to the wise person who has realized the Truth. One must, with unrestricted renunciation and sincere earnestness, follow the instructions of the teacher. This is real tapas (spiritual practice). . . .

When ignorance and delusion disappear, the Atma in everyone shines in its own splendor.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Jnana Vahini, page 1

The Reason to Enquire

*Who gave us the mind to think,
the will to act,
the thoughts to inspire, and
the reason to enquire?*

*In all our deeds in this life,
both good and bad,
why the consequence?*

*When, originally, it was only Him,
before there was any past.*

How can this jiva come to know of Him and His Glory?*

*How can we look down upon another,
when we are only here through Grace?*

Not our own deeds or efforts, but Grace!

Let his Almighty Love encircle the globe,

Let His Wisdom penetrate each heart,

Let all beings be under His Care and His Guidance.

*Let the whole world quaff the cup
of His Divine Nectar.*

Now is the time!

Let His Kingdom Come; Let His Will Be Done.

Om, Shanti, Shanti, Shantihi

—Michael J. Hollander
Fort Lee, New Jersey



*Jiva, the individual, the individual soul, entity, person, man. The soul that resides in the body, the consciousness. The "I" consciousness.

Sai's Message

Teachers and Their Tasks

The ideal of imparting human values is raising a generation of students who have clean and clear consciousness. The actual syllabus is not so important as the creation of an atmosphere where noble habits and ideals can grow and fructify.

[To accomplish this], teachers should not lose their tempers; they should keep their emotions under control and not exhibit depression, dejection or wavering of the will. The quality of work is more important than quantity. So, they should not undertake to do more than they can render satisfactorily. Let their own conscience be the judge. If they feel that they have discharged their duties sufficiently to the children and to society, then they may rest contentedly.

Education has the responsibility of rendering every field of life fruitful and beneficial. It has a duty to the nation to make people skillful and upright. Man alone, among all living beings, has the capacity to recognize Divinity in himself and in all else—to recognize the sacredness of his mission, and to realize manhood which implies detachment, renunciation, virtuous conduct and disciplined behavior. Education is really related to the fulfillment of life. It has to do with the goal of life more than the means of living. It is only through education that we can instill into the minds of people the sacred ideals of human life.

True education should ideally emphasize self-reliance and independent living. It should confer on the student the cour-

age to stand up against injustice, lack of discipline, immorality and falsehood. It should grant steady faith in the Inner Reality as the reality of mankind.

The profession of a teacher is the most responsible one in every country. If the teacher strays from the path of Truth, the entire society will suffer. So you must make every effort to live life uprightly. You have in your charge, looking up to you for guidance, children so innocent that they have no knowledge yet of the world and its ways. It is only when teachers are wedded to discipline and observe good habits that the pupils will be able to shape themselves into ideal individuals and citizens. When the teacher falls victim to bad habits—undesirable manners, bad company and evil behavior—the children, too, will naturally be drawn into evil ways. If the teacher sets an evil example before the pupils, it may happen that the students will turn against the teacher and use the evil they have learned against that teacher. Thus, the teacher has to bear the responsibility for promoting the welfare of the world or bringing the world to disaster.

*Each religion teaches man
the righteous path.
He has only to know it,
and march along.
If the vision is straight,
what can division do?
Listen to this truth, Oh child of God!*

Teachers, you should not give room for any doubt when discussing religious



"The profession of a teacher is the most responsible one."

matters. You must recognize the truth that can reconcile and bring all religions together without distinction. Teach the children this truth and instill love and harmony in the tender minds of boys and girls. They are now lovely plants who de-

pend on you and your care for their proper growth and blossoming. You must help the flower of peace to blossom, and the fruit of spiritual equanimity to be shared by all mankind. In fact, you are not merely teachers at your own schools, but are teachers of the human race. Therefore, you have to cultivate in your own heart, the spirit of sacrifice, the virtues of charity and the awareness of Divinity. Only then can you become entitled to cultivate these in the hearts of the children.

Think about the following questions: How to develop love among the children? How to make them recognize the kinship that unites all mankind? How to implant in their minds feelings against racial prejudice, social distinctions and religious differences? How to bring out the splendor of Divinity that is the core of humanity?

These topics have to be given your special attention.

The students of the future should not waste their lives in seeking material comfort. They must lead lives of sacrifice and service. We must resolve to

guide the students in this direction. You, teachers, have to play a diligent role in making this experiment a success.

In schools, most subjects are related or explained to the pupils. However, the gymnastics teacher has to stand before the students and demonstrate what they should do when he says, "one-two-three." Like the gymnastics teacher, all teachers must do what they say. They must demonstrate in their own lives the truth and validity of what they advise the pupils to do. If the teachers advocate no smoking, but they smoke; then, what authority do they have to advise others against it? By this type of hypocrisy, the teachers lose all respect in the eyes of the pupils. If, however, they observe the rules they impose on pupils and put them into practice; their advice will certainly be followed. When can one reach this stage? It is possible only when one becomes, at least, an embodiment of humanness, and when one recognizes what the essential human qualities are.

The thought that arises in the mind, the word that is formed on the tongue, and the act which is performed—when these three stages are the same—then they indicate humanness. At present, people appear to be just people, but their humanness is absent, partly because they think one way, speak another way and act a third way. Say what you think, do what you say; that is the sign of true humanness. So, you must first act according to your own advice—bring about unity in your own thought, word and deed—then guide the child. Otherwise you, as teachers, cannot cut much ice with the students.

For a tree to grow strong, the roots have to be strong. Without roots the tree

will collapse with the first gust of wind. A house without a foundation will fall down in a heap at the first small tremor. Similarly, pupils in school must have, for their satisfactory progress in life, a strong foundation. And what is that strong foundation? Moral, ethical and spiritual knowledge along with experience are the best foundations.

To be born as a human is the highest fortune of individualized consciousness. So, you must make the best use of this rare chance. There is no sacrifice higher than this, no religion nobler than this, no offering to God holier than this. Believe that just like your physical children, the children who come to you have a right to your love. So, you must decide to make sacrifices for their sake. Sacrifice is the real religion; give and you will gain; grasp and you lose. Recognize the truth of these beliefs. Of course, there are many among you who intellectually recognize that validity. But, so far, you have had no opportunity of translating these beliefs into actions.

Embodiments of Love! Dedicate all your skill, strength and scholarship to the great sacrifice of preventing the children under your care from being spoiled by the evils of injustice, immorality and falsehood. Dedicated work is sacrifice. Delight cannot come out of books, it can only be got by dedicated work. Resolve today to sacrifice for the sake of the children who rely on you for guidance. Then the unalloyed bliss of life will be yours the very day you decide to give yourselves to dedicated service.

—Sathya Sai Baba
from *Bal Vikas* Teachers' Training Camp
Prasanthi Nilayam, 1978

Communicating An Insight, A Path, A Relationship With God

As Sai Baba becomes more widely known, many people will look toward the Sathya Sai Baba Centers for information about him and his teachings. Are we able to communicate clearly and knowledgeably about Swami's teachings and how these teachings relate to our lives?

The Insight

The Sathya Sai Organization and each Sai Center holds within its heart a priceless treasure in the form of an insight about oneness, a path to realizing this oneness, and a relationship with Baba that gives us confidence, power and love. Swami offers an extraordinary insight into a world divided by factions, fighting, unrest and violence. When his teachings are grasped and lived, then we will be at peace, and the world will be filled with love. His teachings—about the unity that underlies diversity, the oneness of all people, the unity of all religions and of man with God—are great, and save us from destruction. Who couldn't be thrilled by an assurance that we are immortal—beyond grief and pain, limitation and death—that we are, in fact, pure bliss, unlimited love, and constant integrated awareness? Who wouldn't be thrilled to realize that everyone has the capacity to detach from the temporary and trivial, and to reside in God's infinite love forever? It seems to me that our centers have to learn to communicate this wonderful insight, so that newcomers can grasp it at whatever level they find familiar and comfortable.

The extraordinary insight that Swami offers us has to do with the real nature of our own Self, and the real nature

of the world. It is absolutely new knowledge for most Westerners who identify themselves as a separate body and mind and accept duality as reality. The insight that individual people are not separate, but are one—that all of reality is one and that each person is God—may be hard to grasp, or even be threatening. Most Westerners will find this insight completely unbelievable. Baba gently leads us to this insight when he reminds us, *"There are many stars but one sky, many countries but one earth, many people but one breath."*

The fact that Swami tells us that this insight cannot be grasped by the mind doesn't make the job of communication any easier. In defining *jnana* (wisdom), Swami says, "*jna*" means knowledge, and "*na*" means that which cannot be known. So *jnana*, wisdom, is about this incomprehensible oneness—about his and our omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience—because he demonstrates it with such grace in his own life. But because this glorious concept is so hard to understand, we must be gentle and sensible with the way in which we try to relate it to newcomers.

This profound insight about the oneness of reality—that duality is an illusion, and that we are all one—carries

extraordinary implications. Swami has said, *"To grasp this insight of unity (Advaita) and live by its principles, takes muscles of iron and nerves of steel."* If we really believe that you and I are not separate but are actually one, if you are I, and I am you, and we are actually God, then it is every person's duty to assure that we all live in harmony and love. Jesus' directive, *"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you,"* becomes, *"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you—because you and the others are one."* This brings a new urgency to Swami's admonition, *"Love all and serve all,"* because all who are considered as others are no other than ourself. This insight calls for a new way of behaving and relating.

The Path

What are Swami's teachings about the path—the way to realize and experience our universal unity and Divinity? If we see the world through our senses and mind, we see duality. If we look through love, we see unity. And how is love cultivated and purified? He teaches us that the battlefield is within our minds.

The task is to purify our impulses through right action in our relationships. We must act without ego or desire for personal gain, if we are to realize that all people are one. This takes a clear inner vision and a courageous honesty about our motives. It takes confidence in following our conscience. *"The way to immortality, to overcome duality,"* says Sai Baba, *"is to overcome immorality. This is the way to love."* The statement that, *"I am a man,"* presents only half of the truth; the other half is that, *"I am not an animal."* *"I am man; I am not an*

animal." In this day and age of selfishness, greed and violence, what a reassuring statement.

Sathya Sai Baba shows us the path to overcoming the selfishness of lust, anger, pride, greed, envy, jealousy, conceit, attachment, hatred, ego and finding the high values of truth, right action, peace, love and nonviolence. The cornerstone of this path is developing a living, vital, constant contact with him. It is keeping the lump of coal next to the live ember, so that we can become like that live ember. He is always there; we only have to look to see his subtle play in our lives. Swami's path—being always watchful for him, looking for him, finding him in everything and offering everything to him—leads us to detachment from the temporary and trivial and toward devotion. It leads us to attachment to the underlying unity, to God. On Baba's path, we learn sense control, not responding to others as objects of our senses, but rather as expressions of God. When we relate to everyone in this way, Swami assures us that we will enter a glorious relationship with him. Sai Baba's path brings us into alignment with the underlying oneness; it leads us to a new appreciation of the unity of all peoples, of all religions and of man with God.

The Relationship

Sathya Sai Baba's life and his relationship with us prove the truth of his teachings. Through our relationship with him, we gain confidence that his teachings represent the truth. We cannot rely on our senses or on our minds, which tell us that duality is real, to reveal this truth. Many of us find our most profound experience of unity in our relationship with

Swami. Witnessing his miracles and signs of his omnipresence in our lives, gives us confidence in his teaching of oneness. Singing to him, telling stories about him, and saying his name deepens our confidence in this reality. In our relationship, Swami saves us from death and leads us to eternal love. This is the third great point that we can share with people who come to our centers.

Sharing the Treasure

Sai Baba offers us priceless gifts of insight, a path to oneness, and a relationship with the Divine. Every Sai Center must be prepared to share these treasures with others.

The way we communicate this gift to newcomers may be diverse in different centers. What is important is that we express our knowledge as clearly and understandably as possible in thought, word and deed for our own benefit and the benefit of newcomers. All the activities and programs of the centers should reflect a clear awareness of the underlying principles. Even when we gather to sing *bhajans* at our devotional meetings, we must find some way to help newcomers appreciate the essence of Swami's teachings in understandable words. For newcomers to encounter only unfamiliar rituals and not discover relevance to anything in their own lives is a great waste of our opportunity to express love to our fellow humans and to uplift our society. "*Time waste is life waste*," says Swami, and there is no time like the present for us to dedicate ourselves to a deeper understanding of his teachings and to express them clearly.

There are many ways this can be done, even at our devotional song or *bhajan*

meetings. In our center we have a chalkboard, like that at the ashram, on which we write, at every meeting, a different message from Baba's writings or discourses. Perhaps we can also pay closer attention to imparting basic information about the teachings during our readings before the *bhajans*. Perhaps we can decorate our walls with posters of sayings from Baba. And we may hand out a brief statement of what we are about and what to expect, such as:

Welcome

Welcome to the Sathya Sai Baba Center. Many people have been attracted to Sai Baba after hearing about his great love, which can be experienced any time and any place, and about his miraculous powers, which support and protect people in all walks of life. His example—as selfless educator, healer, spiritual leader and social reformer—has inspired thousands of people around the world to develop service programs. Sai Baba is a world teacher who brings a universal message of love to help us in our troubled and trying times.

Sai Baba says that his acts of compassion and love and his miracles are a reflection of our own divine nature. He tells us that although we are unaware of it, our real nature is boundless love and immense strength. He emphatically declares that humans are Divine and that the purpose of our life is to realize our identity as pure, limitless love. We come to this realization through our relationship with God, which is dependent on loving service to each other.

Sai Baba does not ask for money or a following, but rather directs people to their own familiar traditions and reli-

gions. He teaches that a relationship with God is best established by seeing God in everything and everyone at all times and by offering our best by loving all and serving all. If one becomes devoted to Sai Baba as Divinity, he offers a deeply personal and loving relationship, through which we can experience his presence in all we do. The power of Baba's love leads us to see the underlying unity in all of creation. He helps us to discover that all people are one, all religions are one, and every human being is one with God.

All the devotional, educational and service activities of our Sathya Sai Baba Center are focused on developing our ability to see God everywhere, at all times. Our devotional singing, study groups, talks and service projects such as feeding the poor, visiting the sick and more, generate loving feelings toward God, and deepen our awareness of his presence in each other.

At center meetings, an announcement similar to this could be made by an officer. "We are happy to have you join us and will be pleased to answer your questions after our singing tonight. You can also call our center to talk to someone."

Devotion must be properly established before one tries to propagate it. If the propagation is done without devotion being properly installed within, it will lead to all kinds of negative results. The world outside is watching the organization with a thousand eyes. Therefore, it is absolutely essential for the members of the Sathya Sai Organization to be proper in their behavior, both in public and in private.

First, the self has to be corrected before help can be rendered, just as a foundation has to be proper before construction can start. Whatever you do must please God, only then the world will be happy.

At that point, a phone number and convenient timings could be offered, etc.

I understand that the insight and the path that Swami is teaching us can be expressed in many ways. Each person and each Sai Center may have a different way of expressing it. But as an organization, we must make it clear that there is an underlying unity. When a person goes to a center in a small town in Oregon or the largest city in New York, the same precious insights about oneness and the path of righteousness should be communicated clearly. We have a priceless treasure to offer to humanity, and it is our duty to learn to express it more clearly, understandably, and relevantly in our own lives and in our communication with all people everywhere. What a great opportunity to be able to offer such a treasure of knowledge, understanding and love to our community. When our lives ring with Swami's insights and our understanding of his path and our Sathya Sai Baba Center programs clearly reflect his teachings, we will have become fine instruments in Swami's advent. *Sai Ram.*

—Samuel H. Sandweiss, M. D.
San Diego, California

—Sathya Sai Baba

From a discourse, July 30, 1988

Children's Corner

Sharing, Caring

School's starting, and I'm doing really well in history. Last year, I could hardly get a "C." But thanks to our *Bal Vikas* service project, my life has changed.

One year ago in September, our *Bal Vikas* group started going to a convalescent hospital on Saturdays to sit with the old folks during their lunch time. Sometimes we'd help to feed them or just visit. Well, I didn't want to give up my Saturdays; so when my friends would call and ask me to go, I was always "too busy."

Then, one Saturday as I was eating lunch alone, I realized how much I missed my friends. They would come back from their hospital visits happy, and they would talk about things that I couldn't share because I wasn't with them. So, I decided to go one time and see, just to try it out.

The hospital was quiet. There was a big room with a whole lot of old people sitting at long tables. Each *Bal Vikas* student was assigned to sit with someone who needed help. I thought that I would be scared, but I went in anyway.



"I cared. All the *Bal Vikas* kids cared about their hospital friends."

The nurse sat me next to Mr. Robertson. He was really old and had very bad arthritis in his hands. He asked me, "Could you hold the fork for me?" I felt nervous, but he kindly told me just how much food to put on the fork and when to slow down if I started going too fast.

I wasn't thinking about him so much as about my history class, and how I was probably going to fail. Mr. Robertson turned to me and asked, "What's wrong?" I was surprised that he could tell something was wrong. I told him about my history class, "I just can't remember all those names and dates." Then he asked me what I DID like. I told him that I LOVED music. He said, "Good! Your music will teach you history!" I didn't know what he meant, but he explained that if I made up little songs with the names and dates in history, and since I could memorize songs, then I would learn my history. I finished visiting with him and thought about what he said. I couldn't wait to get home and try out this new idea.

It worked! I made up songs with the information I needed to study and brought my history grade up. I went back each week to the hospital and got to know Mr. Robertson. I kept thanking him. But, he told me to stop. He said, "Visiting is special to me. Should I keep thanking you, taking up all our time, or should I just accept that you care?" I cared. All the *Bal Vikas* kids cared about their hospital friends.

It was the Saturday before Christmas, and I entered the hospital lunch room. I couldn't find Mr. Robertson. I had a small present for him, some warm socks and a card.

The nurse walked over to me and said that I was to sit next to a blind man, that I would be helping him now. I asked her where Mr. Robertson was, and she told me that he'd passed away. I couldn't believe it. I wanted to run home and cry, but I had to stay because there was a hungry, blind man who needed help. It would be selfish to go home; we were there to do service.

I walked over to this new man and sat down. I asked him how he was, and he said, "O.K." He seemed upset, so I asked him what was wrong. He told me that he'd received a letter from his daughter, and no one had the time to read it to him. I said, "No problem, I'll read it to you after you've had lunch." I still wanted to cry about Mr. Robertson, but someone else needed me then. The blind man said, "Bless you." I looked over to where Mr. Robertson used to sit and whispered, "Bless you." Then, I turned back to my new friend and asked if he'd like a nice, new pair of warm socks. He said he'd like that very much.

Every Saturday I still go to the hospital. I've had six people to help since Mr. Robertson passed away, and I feel pretty lucky to be in *Bal Vikas* and know how wonderful it feels to share, to care.

—A Student

Room 12, Where Else?

When I am introduced as a teacher, I am usually asked, "What do you teach?" When I say, "First Grade," I generally hear a flat, "Oh."

I have never been certain whether this is an expression of pity, sympathy, disgust or perhaps disinterest. During those moments, I always wish I had the time to tell people something like this:

- Yes, I teach first grade!
- Where else would a handsome and very young boy put his arms around me and ask, "Do you know that I love you?"
- Where else would I tie so many hair ribbons and belts and daily get to see a show of so many pretty dresses and shirts?
- Where else could I wear the same dress day after day and be told each time that it is pretty?
- Where else could I have the privilege of wiggling loose teeth and receive a promise that I may pull them when they are loose enough?
- Where else would the future look as bright as it does amid an energetic group to whom nothing is impossible?
- Where else could I guide the first letter formations of a chubby little hand that may some day write a book or an important document?
- Where else could I forget my own aches and pains because of so many cut fingers, scratched knees, bumped heads and broken hearts that need care?
- Where else could I forget taxes and even the state of the nation because Stevie isn't grasping reading as he should, and other methods must be tried?
- Where else would my mind have to stay so young as with a group whose attention span is so short that I must always keep a "bag of tricks" up my sleeve?
- Where else could I feel so close to my Maker as I do each year when, because of something I have done, little children learn?

Yes, I do teach the First Grade in Room 12! Where else?

—A Teacher



The teacher and the pupil will both be immersed in joy only when love that does not calculate the reward binds them together.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. IX, page 1, all editions

Young Adults Summer School 1993

If I were ever to have been in a situation conducive to spiritual practice and being in the presence of so many people trying their hardest to be good, Sathya Sai Baba's Summer Course 1993 was the place to be. If there was ever a time in my life when I was in the company of people where spirituality was the primary topic for discussion and contemplation, that was it! It was a perfect opportunity to change any negative habits of thinking into more positive, confident and good thought patterns. Being in the presence of Sai Baba and living as a student during his Summer Course, I felt, was the ideal situation in which to cultivate virtue and gain self-control.

Of even greater significance, was the opportunity to experience the Lord and the possibility of achieving liberation, illumination, salvation—whatever name one might choose to call it. This was the intensity that I tried to hold on to during my stay in India. Of course, my focus wavered many times.

With varying degrees of effort, I held on to my intention of contemplating on the Lord. It seemed more comfortable to concentrate on God being the One behind the many, rather than on the form. Maybe it was because I had never before seen or experienced the loving form of Bhagavan Baba in person. I usually thought of God as the *Atma* (the indwelling Divinity), the True Reality, unaffected by its creation. This is what I concentrated on. I tried to experience bliss by controlling my thoughts and emotions, by doing *japa* (repeating the Name) and devotional singing—usually, with my eyes closed.

On the other hand, I wondered why I had gone all the way to India to close my eyes in

the presence of the form of the exalted Lord, a sight earned only by numerous merits of good deeds in former lives. I could have stayed home and done that. While I was there, I thought that I might as well ask the Lord about all my heart's desires. He did ask devotees, "*What do you want?*" But, when I thought of God as being the Only Reality, I no longer had any questions or desires.

I was confused as to which way to experience the Lord. Should I dwell on the higher Self to seek peace? Bhagavan holds those dear who are self-controlled, desireless and virtuous. Perhaps I should let all my emotions flow to the Lord, like a *gopi*, obsessed with the Lord's form? Or, perhaps, I could ask him for his highest blessings, thinking that he would hear my plea and pacify me.

During my stay, I made friends with a few devotees who were not members of our group. One of them was Saied. I mention Saied because he influenced me to write a letter to Baba. Until that time, I hadn't felt a letter was necessary; I was just trying to concentrate on the higher Self.

Saied fascinated me because of his love for the form. He would praise Swami in the way that a child would speak of his lovable teddy bear or brag about his mother. He would extol Swami at the mere sight of one of Baba's many pictures. Even though this manner of praise was unusual to me, that was what drew me to Saied, and we became friends. Thus influenced, I wrote Baba a letter. I asked the question that was on my mind. "Oh, omnipresent and omnipotent Lord: Would it be a lack of faith if, while knowing that you are everywhere, I ask for your blessing?"



Back row: Jerome Gross (the author), Arvind Puri, Josh Kintz, David Blanc, David Gordon, Eric Stouder, David Campbell, Hal Honig (chaperon), Scott Doughman, Antonio Hofbauer, Christopher Grauch, Garrett DiFazio. Front row: Tomo Suzuki, Chris Byrum, Jed Geyerhahn, Sri Sathya Sai Baba, Sathya Purcell, Nick LoGrasso, Nam Vu, Karl D'Amico.

When I saw Baba again, I waited for him to take my letter. He didn't take it! I perceived that to be a sign that it was a silly question. So, I wrote another letter. This time I asked for his blessings and even for a glimpse of the experience of the *Atma*. I asked his blessing for all the students present, thinking that it would be selfish to ask for something just for myself. Lord Baba didn't take that letter either! I was sad. I even got a little bit angry, but it didn't last long. The next morning, we had a group interview in which Baba gave his love and attention to all of us.

I never did get a direct answer to my question. However, on two occasions, different students asked Swami to bless their marriages. Baba said to them, "Yes, yes. *I will bless. I am always blessing like this.*" Then

he gestured to everyone saying, "*Have no fear.*" I took that as my answer.

Those thoughts that had been so important to me seemed like silly, unnecessary disturbances. Of course, Bhagavan Baba—the Divine Father and Mother of all creation—always blesses us, whether we ask for it or not. He is our very Self, whether we know it or not.

Since I have been back in the U.S., I have been reading the *Srimad Bhagavatam*. From this book, I have learned that to call upon the Lord and ask for his blessing can be very sweet; because, when doing so, you can praise him to your heart's content. Praise him who is the well-wisher of all the worlds.

—Jerome Gross

San Diego State University
Courtesy, *Sai World for Children and Youth*
Summer/Fall 1993, Vol. XIII, No. 2

Choices

Recently, I was the recipient of a book, entitled, *Women Who Run With Wolves*, by Clarissa Pinkola Estes. My reading stopped at page 34, as I absorbed the story of four Rabbis who were taken to heaven by an angel where they were shown the wheel of Ezekiel.* After having seen such an extraordinary vision, the Rabbis descended to earth, each with a different reaction. For the first Rabbi, the experience was too much. He lost his mind and became a wanderer. The second denied his spiritual vision remanding it to his philosophical pragmatism. The third Rabbi became the knower of all, for had he not been privileged to experience such an event? The fourth became humble, introspective, the true knower. It was he who wrote and sang in praise of the stars, the birds and of all that was around him. So, he proceeded to live a much better life than before.

This story has obviously had a great impact on me. I have gone over it, again and again, in my mind and in my sleep. Why has its influence been so profound?

I resort to my own experiences, my journey on the road of spirituality, and of those whom I have met along the way. Yes, there were those whose minds seemed to have been lost as they had some Godlike vision, unable to control themselves and unable to withstand that which they had witnessed. Sathya Sai Baba reaffirms this when he tells us, *"In spiritual matters, the more we subject ourselves to discipline, the more joy and*

peace we are able to enjoy." Unfortunately, the first Rabbi lacked this discipline and missed the goal.

Yes, I have met the cynics—having been one myself—who refuse to acknowledge something that exists beyond the worldly self, for it would indicate less control and a loss of ego. Baba says, *"Some people say they will believe in God only when they are afforded some experience of divine will. How can faith arise in the will for those with such an attitude?"* Having risen to the state of Rabbi, Minister or Priest does not in and of itself indicate true faith as evidenced in this story.

We come to the third Rabbi. Yes, I have listened to the wise, to those who proclaim to know all the answers. Many of these persons form enclaves of devotees, talk of receiving God's message and of salvation coming through them alone. Swami relates, *"Many are attracted to the outer signs of sainthood—the long gown, the beard, the rosaries, the matted hair. They keep track of many who move about in this land,, and follow them into the wilderness. It is very difficult to demarcate clearly the manifestation of the Lord, so I am announcing myself, describing my mission, the task, the characteristics, the qualities which mark the Avatar from the rest."*

So, I know that I have to learn to discriminate, to examine the mission, the task, the characteristics and the qualities of the one whom I choose to follow.

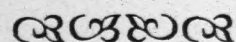
*Ezekiel was a Major, Hebrew Prophet of the Old Testament. It is estimated that he lived some time during the early 6th century B.C.

It is those who are like the fourth Rabbi with whom I have had less contact. Those are the persons whom I wish to emulate. As I see it, they truly understand the Divinity that exists in all life. Have I not heard this from Baba himself, "Be happy, fear not, I am always with you, around you, in front of you, behind you." Baba also says, "Spiritual progress is not merely an intellectual exercise—it is right living, good conduct, moral behavior. The attitudes are the automatic consequence of belief in a good, just, compassionate God who is watch-

ing and witnessing every act. So, faith in an omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent God is the first prerequisite to a good life."

Has it not been Baba who has shown me the path to God, the same path as the fourth Rabbi? It is no wonder that I have been so intrigued by this story for it reiterates my goal in life, my plan to see God in everything, and thus find peace and love toward all.

—Beatrice A. Flaig, M.A.
Ithaca, New York



A Reflection of Me

This poem came to me while I was looking into Baba's eyes in a picture that was printed in the Sathya Sai Newsletter.

*I look into Your eyes and see
A warm familiarity
That lovingly uproots
Pains of the past
Worries of the future
Insecurities of today
Yet all fade away
As I give each to Thee.
I look into these eyes and see
A blissful, awakened Reality
Happiness and love—tranquillity
Thine eyes are mine
A reflection of me.*

—John Hoban
Phoenix, Arizona

Parents are responsible for spoiling their children. Therefore, you must teach human values to parents as well. Today, the country will be prosperous only when students progress. Parents are developing improper love toward their children. This is only a reflection of misdirected attachment and is responsible for misery and sorrow. Parents should correct their children appropriately when they utter falsehoods or make mistakes; then, parents should guide them properly. They should not have fear or worry that their child might run away from home when reprimanded. If the child is not behaving properly, consider that he is dead; you don't have a child.

The country's future is in jeopardy because of children with bad behavior. Therefore, Education in Human Values is essential.

Every teacher must first experience, next practice, then teach human values to others. Everyone should try to develop human values. In spite of participating in *bhajans*, doing *japa*, practicing hatha yoga and *kriya* yoga, you still harbor evil thoughts and tendencies. So, what is the use of doing those things? First, purify your heart, lead a life filled with pure thoughts and feelings, and take part in selfless service. Fill your hearts with love, and then, you can share with others. However much you share this love, you can never exhaust it. Everyday, share your love with at least 10 people. Then, your life be sanctified.

3HV

If you want to understand human values, you should have perfect harmony of thought, word and deed. It is not EHV;

it is 3HV. The first H is for Heart; the second H is for Head; the third H is for Hand. What you feel in your heart, you should say in words and show in actions. Only when there is harmony of thought, word and deed can a person be called a true human being.

In Vedantic parlance, a person with harmony of thought, word and deed is considered a great soul, a godman. You are a sinner if there is no harmony of thought, word and deed. If you think one thing, say something different and do something else, it is a sin. Human values are unity of thought, word and deed.

Unity, Unity, Unity

According to *Bharatiya* (Indian) culture, when people meet they greet each other by doing *namaskaram* (folding hands in prayer-like fashion when greeting someone). It signifies unification of the five outer and five inner senses. Another spiritual significance of *namaskaram* is seeing unity in diversity. True human values mean unifying thought, word and deed. In our Sathya Sai Organization you should definitely develop such human values. Keep in mind the meanings of the words, "self" and "help."

- *Self is the foundation.*
- *Help is the roof.*
- *Self is righteousness.*
- *Help is liberation.*

Between those two reside desire and wealth. These four are common goals of mankind: righteousness (*dharma*), wealth (*artha*), desire (*kama*) and liberation (*moksha*). These are the four *purusharthas* or four goals of mankind. There should be unity of all four. You should convert these four goals into two.

Combine righteousness and wealth—earn wealth in a righteous way. Righteousness and wealth should become one. Next, you should combine desire and liberation—have a desire for liberation, not for wealth, spouse or children. Hanking after wealth, spouse and children leads to bondage. These three desires burn up human values.

Mere repetition of mantras and acquiring bookish knowledge is a waste of time. Instead, you should practice. You ought to have practical knowledge rather than wasting time in recitation of mantras and *slokas*. First gather knowledge from books, then transfer it into your head, and then put it into practice. Unfortunately, nowadays, there is no unity in society. Only when there is unity, can we accomplish lofty ideals.

Embodiments of Love! Unity is very important in the Sathya Sai Organization. We should exemplify the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Everyone should unite and become one without any hatred, jealousy or difference of opinions. You must try to forget individual differences that arise and instead, have brotherly feelings that are not artificial.

Practice

People greet one another saying, "Hello, hello." But, they are hollow inside. It is merely a stunt which will deceive you. Instead—follow your heart, practice with love and develop divine feelings—those are true human values. God dwells in your heart; therefore, have faith that all the feelings that arise in your heart are Divine. Never harm anyone with harsh words. You cannot always oblige, but, you

can always speak obligingly and speak softly. Only then can you develop human values. If bad feelings arise, sit quietly and repeat for five minutes, "I am not an animal; I am human." Then those bad feelings will disappear.

When you get angry with another person, do not enter into an argument. Instead leave the scene immediately, sit quietly, and say, "I am human; not an animal." Thus, with persistent effort, you can get rid of all bad qualities. Human values are essential. With proper guidance and without being artificial, you should teach these human values.

Advance Slowly

Dr. Jum Sai (from Thailand) has said Sathya Sai Education in Human Values has been implemented in many colleges and universities. That is a situation for rejoicing; but, at the same time, you should be very careful. In the beginning, students are very excited, happy and enthusiastic; but, if values are not put into practice, it will have a negative effect on the students. So, the program ought to be developed slowly. What goes up fast, also comes down fast. You must advance slowly and peacefully, then there will be permanent and steady progress.

Teachers should take up this training in human values. They should teach it correctly to at least one or two students.

The whole world is full of the disease of jealousy. Most people become jealous of the progress of others. To get rid of this feeling of jealousy, you should develop forbearance. Many people may ridicule, criticize or accuse you; but, you must try to be patient, observe silence and have tolerance. This forbearance

renders great strength, and will help you overcome any obstacles or any wicked tactics of others. Be peaceful.

The Three P's

Teachers, you should develop the 3 P's before teaching students. They are:

- *Purity*
- *Patience*
- *Perseverance*

When you have these three, you can achieve anything. But, you sometimes lose patience and purity. What is the reason for this lack of purity? The only reason is not having absolute faith. If you have full faith in Swami, you will definitely have purity. When faith is wavering like that of a doubting Thomas, you will not have purity. When you have full faith, you develop patience. Then you will not be concerned regarding what others say about you. You will realize that they are talking about your body, which should not be of any concern to you. When you have this kind of faith, people will either not talk about you, or, if they do talk about you, they will soon become quiet.

Cooperation not Operation

Teachers who are teaching human values should have firm faith. People at home and in society may criticize you for participating in Education in Human Values. Your spouse might point out that, forgetting your duties at home, you are going outside and getting involved in teaching human values. Do not be afraid of such criticism. Just say, "This is my way of life." Ask yourself, "What is the purpose of life?" It is not merely to spend

time eating, drinking, sleeping, merry-making and ultimately dying.

The purpose of life is to realize one's true Self. First, put this question to yourself, "Who am I? Who am I?" You are forgetting this, and you're more interested in knowing the whereabouts of other people. You are always busy asking, "Who are you? What is your name? Where did you come from?" Instead of asking, "Who am I?" If you know who you are, you will know about others. Say, "I am human, so they are also human. I am God, so they are also God."

It is quite an easy path to follow. Only the one who does not know the Self will criticize, make fun or do harm to others. First, develop love within yourself. Truth, righteousness, peace, love and nonviolence are like five fingers. Only when all the fingers act in coordination, can you hold a glass of water; acting independently, your fingers cannot achieve this. Always join the five fingers, never separate them. Like five fingers, there should be cooperation, not operation among the five values.

Cooperation is true righteousness or *dharma*. This kind of unity is the life and goal of a human being. Unity is the goal of life; unity leads to Divinity. Be united and solve all the problems of life. Bring up the children in such a way that they will be exemplary future leaders of the country. Children should be taught human values both at home and outside.

First, you should teach these values at home. But unfortunately, nowadays, teachers forget to teach human values to their own children at home, but they go out and teach them to other children.

Other children who notice this will be wondering, "If human values are so good, why are teachers not teaching them to their own children?" This is a major deficiency. So start at home, and let other children join yours. This leads to unity and then purity. The major reason for all trouble, sorrow and war in the world is because of the absence of human values. In the absence of human values wealth, scholarship, name, fame and position are all useless. When developing Education in Human Values, know that love is the greatest force for unifying humanity. This is unity; this is Divinity.

Practice, Practice . . .

Realize that there is only one *Atma* (the Divinity within each being). If you develop this feeling of oneness, all of you will live like brothers and sisters. Human values are essential; they come from the heart. They have to be practiced by the individual, then taught to others. This is not easy, but with hard work and effort it can be achieved. Even mundane things like learning to drive a car or riding a bicycle needs a lot of practice and effort. By practice, practice, practice alone, can you learn human values.

Walking, talking, eating, reading—everything comes by practice only; so do human values. Everyday you should examine and analyze whether you are practicing what you are teaching, and whether it is giving you satisfaction. If you realize that there are any mistakes, you should correct them the next day. If you practice like that, you will earn respect from the entire nation. Sathya Sai desires only this—that everybody should be good, and that the entire universe should be happy.

Help Ever, Hurt Never

Do not have bad feelings about anyone. Never hurt anyone. You may experience pain, but do not cause pain to others. That is the essence of *Bharatiya* culture, which is the sum and substance of all the 18 *Puranas* (scriptures) which declare "Help ever. Hurt never." Under no circumstances should you hurt others. If others hurt you, repeat to yourself, "This is good for me. This is good for me." Difficulties will lead you to happiness; pain will lead you to pleasure.

Sunset precedes sunrise. Pleasure and pain are like heat and cold. Do not have fear of anything or anyone. Have only fear of sin. The only love you should have is love of God. And have morality in society. The three maxims are:

- *Fear of sin*
- *Love of God*
- *Morality in society*

If there is morality in society, there will be fear of sin. If there is no fear of sin, you cannot develop love of God. You are born, grow up and live in society; so, you should desire its well-being. Your welfare depends on the welfare of the society. You ought to have broad thinking like that to teach human values. In the beginning, teach pupils to tell only the truth—not to tell lies under any circumstances.

If you make a mistake, accept it. This will earn respect in the long run; one who learns to accept his mistakes will be respected. Then teach the students about right action or *dharma*. *Dharma* does not only mean right action. *Dharma* should give satisfaction to one's con-

science. Do it to your full satisfaction. *Dharma* is infinite. It cannot be equated as just charity. There is no proper English equivalent for *Dharma*. If you follow truth, it is easy to have *dharma*.

Teachers, never be disappointed. Be enthusiastic and develop human values day by day. Teach human values, not only to children, but also to adults. But, before teaching, you should experience human values; then they will have a permanent impact. Though it is difficult, bear with it. Develop human values in all schools, colleges and in universities.

Swami knows that children are very, very good, but teachers and parents are spoiling them. More than teachers, parents are spoiling them. Whatever the child says, parents will believe it. This is due to foolishness of the parents. A foolish father can only have a foolish son. So, teach the children correctly. If you follow the path of truth, the country will progress in all aspects.

These human values should be developed in all countries; people everywhere should be happy and peaceful. All are



"Teachers . . . Be enthusiastic and develop human values."

children of God. You should develop human values with feelings of love. Develop love for God's name, and also, develop good qualities and good behavior.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Prasanthi Nilayam, India
November 20, 1993

Sathya Sai Book Center of America
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Where the Road Ends—This is Howard Murphet's latest book on Sathya Sai Baba. Mr. Murphet's three previous books about Baba were: "*Sai Baba, Man of Miracles*," "*Sai Baba Avatar*," and "*Walking the Path with Sai Baba*." They have been published in many lands and in many languages.

Howard Murphet has said of his latest literary effort, "After I came to Sai Baba, He gradually revealed Himself to me as God. This book attempts to show how He brings greater and deeper understanding of life's purpose and a higher degree of happiness to the individual and thereby to the life of mankind. I hope to throw some light on His cosmic, universal revelation, and His significance in the forward evolution of humanity."

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