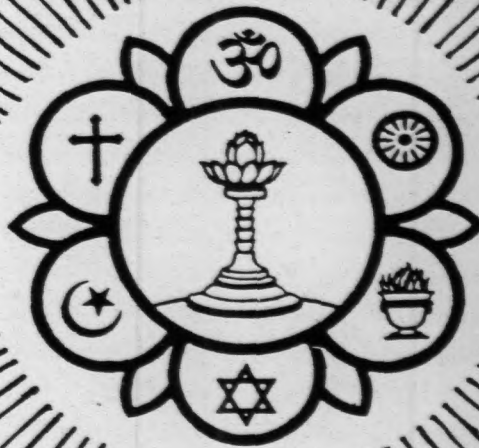




SATHYA SAI ***Newsletter, USA***

FALL—1995
Volume 20, Number 1
September, October, November

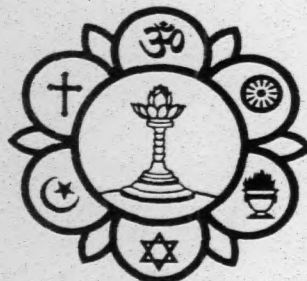
Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

September, October, November 1995

*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



Life is a pilgrimage to God. The road lies before you, but unless you take the first step forward and follow that with others, how can you reach the goal? Start with courage, faith, joy and steadiness. Then, you are bound to succeed.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Speaks, Vol. I, pp. 102-103 (newly revised edition)
Now available at the S. S. Book Center, see p. 32 of this issue.

Sai's Message

Why Have You Come?

On the evening of August 20, 1984, word was circulated within the ashram at Prasanthi Nilayam that Baba called for all the foreigners to assemble in the mandir the next morning. So, shortly after eight on the morning of the 21st, virtually all of the foreigners crowded into the mandir. The doors and windows were ordered shut by Baba, and translators were summoned. The anticipation was almost palpable.

With many foreign guests going to India in recognition of Baba's 70th birthday, Sai's message to travelers from abroad is as relevant today as it was then.

Human Birth

Having taken this precious birth as human beings, we must realize what "humanness" means. Man means the "mind." Mind means "desires." The result of desires may be good or bad. You experience the consequences of those good or evil things in your daily life. Therefore, the first thing you have to do is to realize that you are human.

Having been born as human beings, we must make an effort to live up to our human values. In matters relating to food, sleep, and enjoyment, the behavior of man has much in common with animals. We take food. We sleep. We enjoy the pleasures of the senses. Similarly, birds, animals and other creatures also experience this. What is the distinction between human life and the life of other animals? What is the purpose of life? Many people do not think about this.

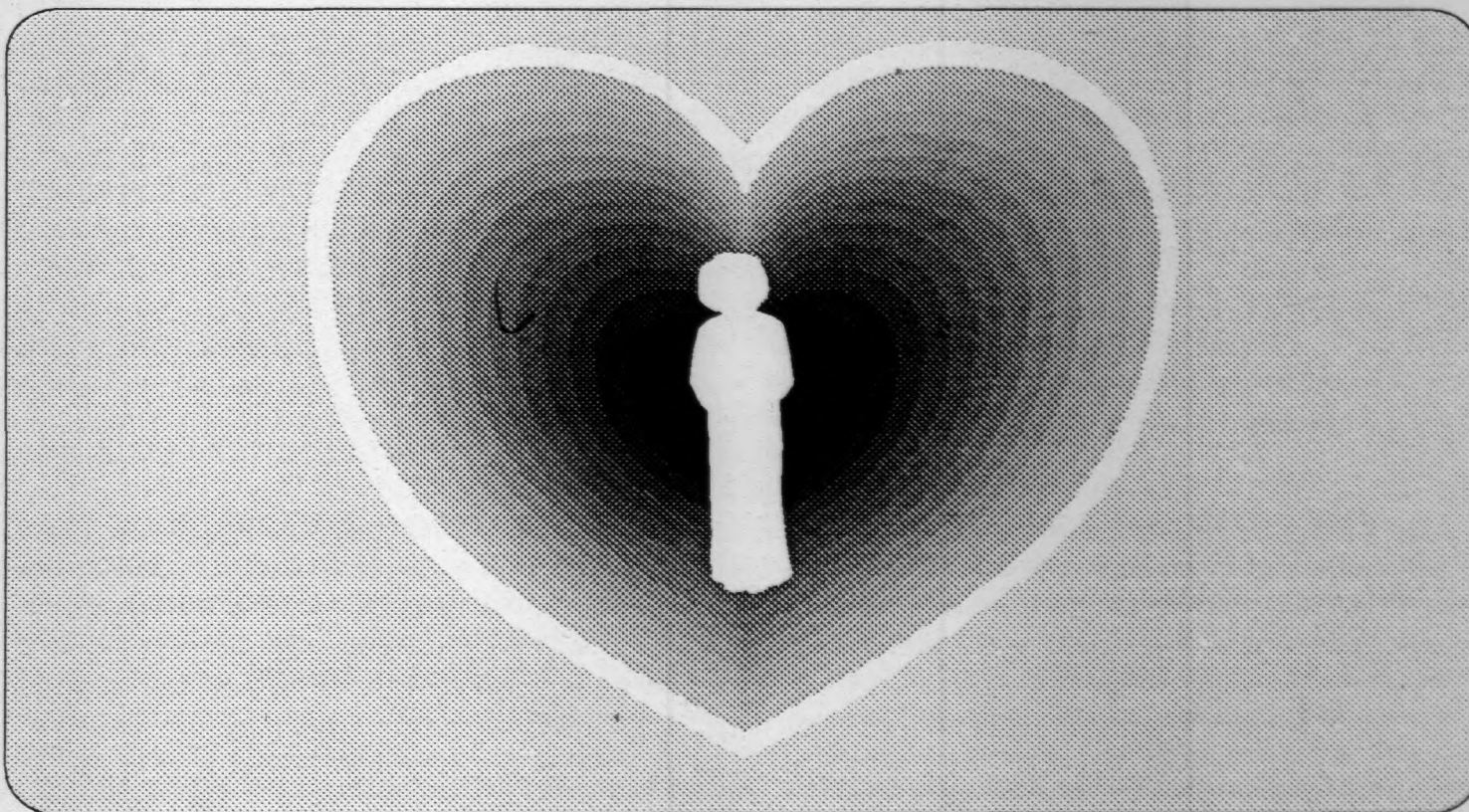
Being born as humans, you must live as humans. Discipline, manners, behavior, dress—in all these four things you must behave like human beings. Today, people are living very much the life of animals. People think that their main pursuit is to enjoy the senses. This is not true humanness. Compassion, love,

adjustment, conduct, manners, and also understanding—these are the qualities that human beings should develop.

Why Have You Come?

All of you are coming here [to Prasanthi Nilayam] and spending lots of money. Why are you coming? Are you regarding this as a picnic or a holiday? Are you regarding it as a tourist attraction? No! No! You have come to broaden your hearts. You must confirm the principle of love. It is not love based on selfishness. This is love which is combined with divinity. We must make a firm resolve to pursue the spiritual path. You must journey from the starting point of "me and mine" to "we and ours."

In these days, people regard life as consisting of sensual pleasures and, therefore, are wasting their time. You must realize that this is animal behavior. You must develop character. During these times, people do not devote much attention to character. Without character they are like animals. Animals have many mates. If people also have many husbands or many wives, they are worse than the animals. Develop the point of view of having only one spouse.



ed is life wasted. By wasting time, one is developing laziness. Laziness is rust and dust. Therefore, you should under no circumstances waste time. Whatever bad qualities you have, you must get rid of them. Having come to a sacred place like this, you must try to get rid of at least some of your bad habits.

Appropriate Conduct

You must also control improper looks. In Western countries, the bad habit of men gazing at women and women looking at men has developed to a great extent. This is really the quality of an animal. It also develops demonic tendencies. And these tendencies are getting worse in the case of young men and women. So first of all, plan to control your gaze. Rather than looking at people with an evil eye, it is better to lose your sight altogether.

divine love. Many people go around talking about “divine this, divine that,” but they indulge in “deep wine.” You do not work hard enough. Just eating and going around are not enough, even the dogs do that. We are not dogs; we are gods. We are the embodiments of love. We are the embodiment of God. Realizing this truth, we must pursue our lives.

Next, avoid hearing wrong or improper sounds. We should not listen to these things. By hearing, seeing and talking about improper things, our hearts get polluted. Take the case of the camera. The camera will take any picture toward which the lens is focused. The mind is like the lens of a camera. If you turn the mind toward improper hearing, improper talk, and improper sights—your heart is imprinted with those pictures. Keep the heart pure by turning to God.

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In these days, people regard life as consisting of sensual pleasures and, therefore, are wasting their time. You must realize that this is animal behavior. You must develop character. During these times, people do not devote much attention to character. Without character they are like animals. Animals have many mates. If people also have many husbands or many wives, they are worse than the animals. Develop the point of view of having only one spouse.

You must understand why you have come. You have come after spending a lot of money, yet you are wasting your time strolling about and engaging in unnecessary and useless talk. Realize that time is most important; no other thing is as precious as time. If you lose your health, by various steps you may regain it. If you lose your wealth, by making various efforts you may get it back. But if you lose time, you can never get back even a single second. Every person, and every object in creation—everything—is being carried along in the stream of time. Because all are being carried in the stream of time, you should not attach yourselves to things of no value. There is only one who protects everyone, and that is God. Therefore, hold on to God.

Do not waste time! Many persons, even here, waste their time. Time wasted is life wasted. By wasting time, one is developing laziness. Laziness is rust and dust. Therefore, you should under no circumstances waste time. Whatever bad qualities you have, you must get rid of them. Having come to a sacred place like this, you must try to get rid of at least some of your bad habits.

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The next immoral thing to avoid is improper speech. It is a very negative quality for men to go out and talk with women and women with men. Control your speech. You talk of friendship. What is friendship? Your real friend is God. All other friendships continue only as long as there is something to be gained. They are temporary. When a person is prosperous, there are many friends. When the money is gone, when youth is gone, when one is down and out, there are no more friends. When the pond is full of water, frogs gather there. When the pond goes dry, no frogs can be seen. By cultivating such temporary friendships, you are wasting your whole life.

Selfishness should be avoided. Self is loveless. Love is selfless. So, what you should develop is not worldly love but divine love. Many people go around talking about “divine this, divine that,” but they indulge in “deep wine.” You do not work hard enough. Just eating and going around are not enough, even the dogs do that. We are not dogs; we are gods. We are the embodiments of love. We are the embodiment of God. Realizing this truth, we must pursue our lives.

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Attain Divine Willpower, Not a Weak Mind

People are really full of divine will power. When you waste your willpower, the mind gets weaker. Because you are indulging in unnecessary thought, unnecessary speech, and unnecessary actions, you are losing your willpower. Here is a small example: There is a radio set. When you switch it on and tune it, you get news. When the radio is on for half an hour, a lot of current is spent. Our body is like a radio set. Our concentration is the tuning mechanism. Our thoughts are the programs. When you go on talking and talking, a lot of energy is spent. When your energy goes down, you develop allergies. When energy goes, the mind becomes weak. Because the mind becomes weak, mental diseases start. This is the reason that in the Western countries a large number of people develop mental diseases. They are unable to keep their minds steady even for a moment. With the money they earn, they waste it on food and entertainment. Rather than leading a life of that kind, it is better to die. Why should one live? You must live for an ideal. If there are no ideals, then there are no objectives.

People today observe no season, no reason for their actions. First, we should develop human qualities. You must ask yourself these questions, "Why have I come here?" "Am I achieving the purpose for which I have come, or am I doing something else?" Why should you unnecessarily go around in groups? Is going around like that the reason you came here? Whatever time you have, sit down quietly and contemplate God.

Don't Waste Money and Don't Waste Time

One thing that is harming us and our countries is laziness. By being lazy, we are being treacherous to our own country and our own community. We must control our desires. Put a ceiling on desires. The first rule is: Do not waste money. The misuse of money is evil. Too much money is being wasted on unnecessary travel and other things.

The second rule is: Don't waste time. Time is God. Time wasted is life wasted. By wasting time, you are wasting your divinity, your divine power.

Don't Waste Food and Energy

The third rule is: Don't waste food. And the fourth rule is: Don't waste energy. Western people waste all four of these things—they waste money; they waste time; they waste food; they waste energy. Because of the waste of these, all of life is wasted. Life is a valuable thing. Life is full of divinity. But we are spending all of our time looking at the external world. How long will this world last? Turn your sights inward.

Countries like America, Russia and others have been exploring outer space. Scientific developments are occurring very fast. But nothing is being done to control the senses. People who are exploring outer space are not even traveling half an inch inside the heart. People are able to fly in the sky like birds. They are able to go in the water like fish. But they have not learned to live on the earth like human beings. What good is it to live like a bird or a fish? Being on the earth, you should live like a human being. If a person has not learned the qualities of being human, why learn any

other thing? Therefore, we should understand the divinity that resides in our hearts. Don't develop a monkey mind. It is not an ordinary monkey. It is a mad monkey. The body is like a water bubble. Do not be led by the body. Follow your conscience. Follow the dictates of your conscience, and you can achieve a good life. On the contrary, people obey their monkey minds and cater to their useless bodies. That is the reason why human qualities are declining. Wherever you go, you must constantly remind yourself, "I am human. I am human." It is not enough to remind yourself that you are human, you should also remind yourself, "I am not an animal."

Think About the Soul

Try to find out who you are. This is my body. This is my hand. This is my head. But who am I? That is the first question. This is my body, therefore, I am not the body. This is my kerchief. The kerchief can be separated from my person. I am not the kerchief. Likewise, this is my body. I am not the body. Who am I? I am God. I am God. I am God. The mind and the body are instruments. Do not for a moment consider that you are the body. As long as you identify yourself with the body, lust will develop. The body is like clothing that you wear. Just as you change your clothes, your body also changes. Therefore, don't bother about the clothing [the body]. Bother about the divinity that is inside. Life is a dress rehearsal for death. Birth and death exist only for the body. For the soul there is no birth, no death. You are the embodiment of the soul. Don't think of the body. Don't think of the mind. Think about the soul—make it pure, keep

it pure. Because of your desires it becomes impure.

Here is a piece of cloth. White is its true nature. When it is used, it becomes soiled. You give it to a *dhobi* (person who does laundry) for washing. When the *dhobi* brings it back, it is again white. The *dhobi* has not made it white. White is its true nature. What he did was to remove the dust and dirt from it. Similarly, the soul is naturally pure. But the soul acquires dirt and dust through desires. *Sadhana* (spiritual discipline) is the *dhobi* for purifying the heart. The *dhobi* of *sadhana* removes the dust and dirt from the soul. When the dust that is covering it is removed, the soul recovers its purity. Therefore, you must see to it that the heart doesn't contain dust and lust. Lust is the worst quality. It is the number one enemy of those who are going along the spiritual path. If you want to go to heaven, you have to develop a pure heart. All your thoughts must be turned toward God.

Awareness is Life

Our spiritual heart is like a lock; mind is like a key. If you turn it toward the world, you get attached. If you turn it toward God, you get detached. So, you must concentrate your mind on the heart, and turn the heart toward God. This is the primary *sadhana* which everyone has to do. Life is an extremely precious thing. In life, you will experience some difficulties, some losses, some troubles. Do not become bothered about these things. Be fearless! Life is a challenge, meet it! Life is a dream, realize it! Life is a game, play it! Life is love, enjoy it!

Please turn to page 29

“What Are You Waiting for, Madman? Go!”

In the summer of 1993, our group from the United States, led by a long-time devotee of Sathya Sai Baba, went to India. At that time, Baba was in Brindavan. After each *darshan* (seeing a holy being), the whole group would get together and share experiences. We tried to recapture every single word, glance or smile that He directed toward any member of the group.

First, Sai talked to somebody from the men's side, then on another day to somebody on the women's side. We were holding our breath, hoping for an interview. Then, on the fifth day after our arrival, Sai came over to the leader of our group, had a very short conversation with him, and moved on. I was sitting in the third row and could not hear the conversation, but by the movements and excitement in the first row, I could guess that something very important happened. Hopefully, we were called for an interview. It was confirmed when a volunteer went over to our leader, and by the gestures of his hands, I understood that he was saying there was no rush to go at that moment. Baba had just started *darshan*, and we could go for the interview a little later. We complied. Meanwhile, Baba continued *darshan*.

In the Sai Ramesh Hall in Brindavan, devotees sit in such a manner that Swami can walk between and around them. Within just a few minutes, Baba was again near our group, and He saw that we were still sitting. He quickly

turned toward the leader of our group, leaned a little forward, made an expression with His face and eyes which did not require any further interpretation, then He almost shouted, “*What are you waiting for, madman? Go!*”

During the interview, Swami talked to us—answered questions, manifested things, and gave precious teachings—often repeating, “*God is everywhere, God is everywhere.*”

Later, during our stay, we had another interview. At one point during that meeting Baba raised His right hand in a blessing gesture and said, “*You see nothing in this hand. Everything is in this hand. Nothing is everything. Everything is nothing!*”

Any one of the teachings that Swami gave us during those precious interviews would be enough for a whole lifetime to try to understand and practice. But that first statement of His in the *darshan* line which started our first interview stuck deep in my memory. I have thought of it many times in the course of the last two years. It was said with such force and intensity, as if to send us beyond the interview room.

It was as if Swami staged the whole drama of humankind within those few minutes. The Lord softly called, “Come my child. Come near.” The world screamed, “Wait! No rush, you have plenty of time.” Then the Lord, out of His infinite compassion had to use the stick to get us moving. “*What are you waiting*

for, madman? Go!"

We humans tend to waste most of our words. The Lord does not waste any. Every single word of His is precious; every single word of His is a gold nugget; every single word is designed to prod us along the thorny road to self-realization. Even seemingly simple questions in the *darshan* line like, "*Where are you from?*" and "*How many?*" might have completely different, hidden and very deep meanings. Where are we from? How many of what? But the one mentioned first seems like a real treasure house. What was the importance of that question-statement? Many times during the last couple of years I have tried to analyze that question—every word of it.

What are we waiting for? Will anything happen that is more important than what has already happened? We are born during the same era as the Avatar. The chances of this alone is like winning a lottery. Due to our good fortune, He called us to His lotus feet. We have an opportunity to model our lives after His, receive His love, protection and blessings, use Him as our guiding light, surrender to Him and love Him without any fear of rejection.

What are we waiting for?

I am reminded of the time when I grew up in the former Soviet Union during the darkest ages of the communist indoctrination. The only way for me to find out anything about God and religion was to attend lectures in the Moscow "House of Scientific Atheism." During those times, sitting around me half-asleep, were the propagandists assigned by their government agencies and obliged to attend those lectures to absorb the "science" of destroying religion. Then

they had to carry this knowledge back to their work places and spread it around among their colleagues. The lecturers were highly educated professors of philosophy. They were authorities in the fields of criticizing the *Bible* and scientifically disproving the existence of Christ. Once, during a one-on-one conversation on the subject of Jesus Christ's actual existence, one of the professors confessed to me that in his opinion, "Someone had to have passed there." The propagandists on the other hand did exactly what they were assigned to do. They carried the knowledge back to their work places, sowed the seeds of atheism which sprouted, grew, and put more and more cracks in the structure of that Godless Society. We know what happened! But for me, all that happened so long ago that it now seems like a myth.

What are you waiting for? Swami said it with such force, intensity and surprise that it still rings in my ears. Isn't having an Avatar for a teacher enough to make one run, let alone go?

Swami pointed out that because of our innate laziness and lack of intensity, we are wasting precious, precious time instead of sanctifying every minute of our lives. Swami often talks about intensity, which we lack.

On the subject of intensity, I am reminded of a story I was told by a Zen master while studying Zen Buddhism. It happened in ancient China. Two Buddhist monks met on a road. One had a nice clean robe, the dress of the other was of old pieces of paper haphazardly strung together. When the monk in the nice robe asked the other one why he was wearing such inappropriate clothing, the paper-robed monk replied, "I don't have time

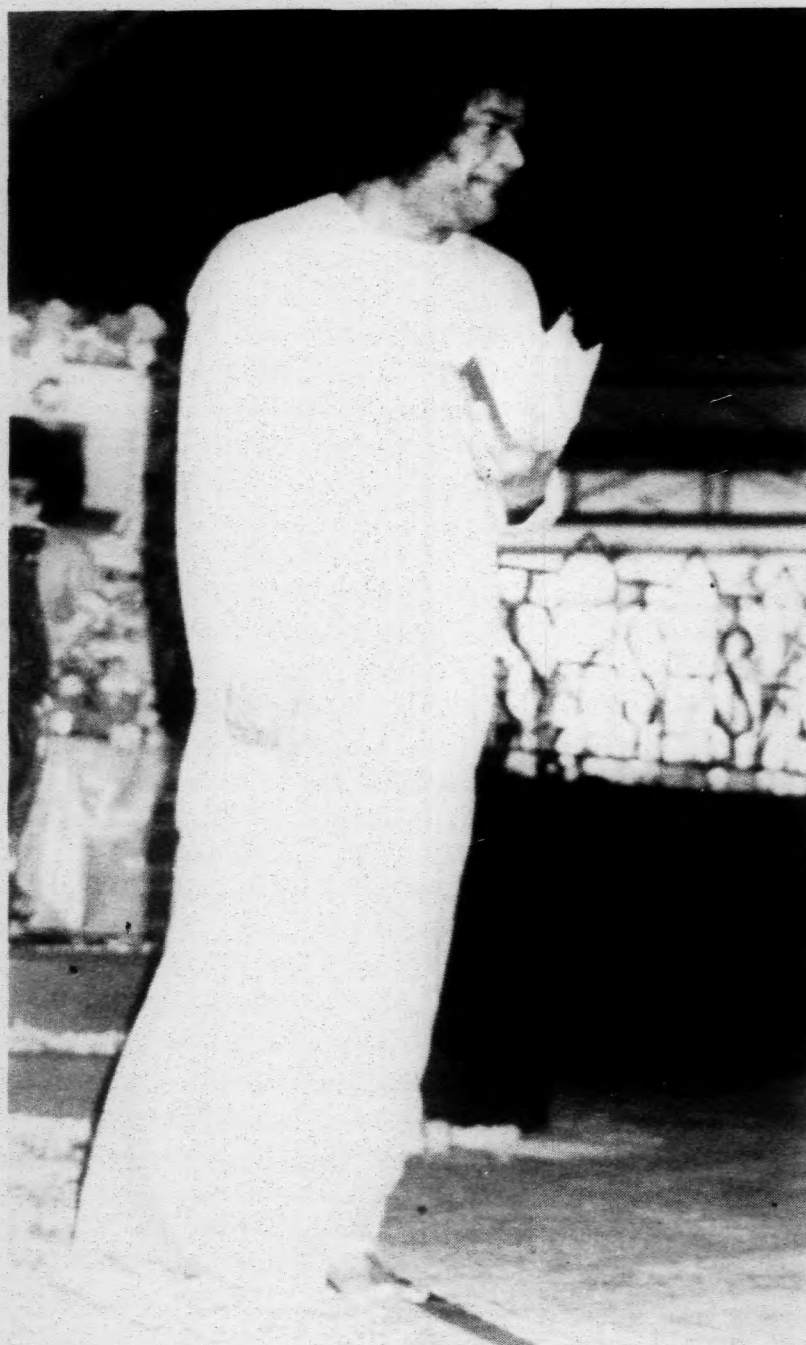
for these things."

"What are you waiting for, madman? Go!" Madman, I am. The care for food, shelter and bodily comforts still takes the major part of my life. And the mind! Baba often says to people, "*Monkey mind, mad monkey mind!*" Surely it applies to me. The mortal battle with the mind has just begun, it's far from being over. According to Swami, "*die mind*" is the proper spelling for "*diamond*."

"What are you waiting for, madman? Go!" "G" and "O" are two ordinary letters of the English alphabet, but they are music to the ears of devotees. A symphony! Go! Swami prods us every step of the way. The road is so difficult over the mountains of accumulated karma. The temptation to stop and relax is so great. But Baba says, "*Rest is rust*." No time for rest, not in this lifetime. Make the most of this journey, march as long as you can, and pitch your tent ever nearer to the goal when darkness falls. Sometimes it seems that there is no energy for one more step, but the higher the peak, the greater the view of the valley below.

In the global scheme of things, what is the importance of our individual situations, what is the importance of the world where conditions seem to worsen, and cruelty seems to grow? If we were the contemporaries of Jesus Christ, and the good news reached our ears, wouldn't many of us make a journey on foot to bask in His love and touch His feet?

The modern world does provide some advantages. No matter where we live in



"What are you waiting for?"

this world, in a matter of two or three days of traveling, we can be in the presence of the Avatar and breathe the same air that He breathes. What good fortune! Leaving everything in the hands of the Lord, without waiting any longer—the madman that I am—I will go!

—Vladimir Gurevich
Fair Lawn, New Jersey



In Memory of John S. Hislop, Ed.D., April 11, 1905—August 4, 1995

Jack, as his friends called him, was told by Baba to organize the Sathya Sai Baba Council of America (later changed to the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council of the United States of America), and he served as Swami's instrument to organize the Sathya Sai Baba Centers in the early 1970's. Dr. Hislop worked tirelessly with one pointed devotion for Baba; no task was too big or too small.

Swami paid him the ultimate compliment, saying, "*He is my devotee, my good devotee.*"

We could pay homage to him by striving to become "good devotees" and by reading or rereading Jack Hislop's books, *Conversations With Sathya Sai Baba*, and *My Baba and I*.

—Editor

Life Eternal

*And soon, I shall be free to roam on high
and will pursue my sacred vision beyond
the ominous, darkening sky. . .*

*. . . where just behind the secret gate
my own true soul mate
will be waiting with smiling eyes
and gentle arms to welcome me,
welcome me into His keeping.*

—Hanna Hamilton
Desert Hot Springs, California

Service in Prasanthi Nilayam

Baba says, "Service is a lifetime program, it knows no rest or respite. There can be no higher austerity or spiritual exercise than service, nothing is more rewarding."

In any visit to Puttaparthi, the first few days are spent getting over jet lag, becoming acclimated, getting settled in one's accommodations, going to the orientation session, and getting into the flow of the schedule. The first visit is always more difficult. One has to learn about *darshan* (seeing a holy being) and when it begins, how to get into the *mandir* (temple) for devotional singing and meditation, where the ashram shops are, when they are open and so on.

However, when one has become accustomed to life in Prasanthi Nilayam (meaning Abode of Peace) it is time to think of service. Service can and should be done as much at the Abode of Peace as elsewhere. Prasanthi Nilayam runs on service. That is how the place is organized and managed. That is how 5,000 to 10,000 people are accommodated and fed everyday.

The most obvious form of service is the corps of *seva dal* volunteers—the men and women with service neckerchiefs who manage the crowds at *dars-han* and *bhajans*, serve as watchmen at the sheds and other buildings, clean the *mandir*, work in the bookstore and so forth. Over 250 men and women serve for a couple of weeks at a time in those capacities. Some of them are assigned to watch over your sleeping quarters during *darshan* and other times, so that your possessions are somewhat secure.

Another obvious form of service deals with food. Everyday, the Indian

and Western canteens feed thousands of people. Volunteers prepare food, cook, serve and clean up. Some of the volunteers are permanent residents of Prasanthi Nilayam, others are visiting for a week or two. In the Western canteen last summer, it took 15 to 20 women to cut up vegetables for the day. After each meal, if only 10 of the necessary 20 people showed up to wash dishes and clean up afterwards, the 10 had to work twice as long. Actually, this kind of service was fun. There was a sense of camaraderie, of belonging, of unity, that those who did not serve were missing. And cutting vegetables while singing *bhajans* was a real experience.

A more individual kind of service is cleaning. The rooms we are allotted become quite dusty over the years since the cleaning women we engage wash the floors and bathrooms without any cleaning detergents. A real service would be to get some good cleaning materials from the shops and steadily scrub the bathroom, doors, and windows absolutely clean during your one or two week stay. Leave the room the way you would like to find it.

The sheds, too, are usually in need of cleaning, especially the showers and toilets. Work parties could be organized for this purpose. Together, we could make the Abode of Peace shine.

There are many less obvious ways of serving. You have only to look to find your niche. One devotee noticed that the lines

at the ice cream shop were too long because of a lack of cashiers, so he volunteered. He then found out that the ice cream is made right in the shop on a 24-hours-a-day basis. After that, he spent a good deal of time making ice cream. Another devotee noticed that in the bookstore, some shelves were falling apart and that a beautiful clock, inscribed with Baba's maxim, "WATCH your Words, Actions, Thoughts, Character, and Heart," needed repair. It was dusty, and parts of it were held together only by some old, brittle cellophane tape. He

spent five hours cleaning and repairing the shelves and the clock which now look like new.

So, look for the opportunity to do some service while at Prasanthi Nilayam. You will find your stay much more rewarding. As Baba says, "*The secret of peace lies in service and love toward all.*" What better place to try to find that peace, through service and love than in the Abode of Peace itself?

—David Gries

National Service Coordinator
Sathya Sai Baba Organization, USA



Drinking Water Project for Anantapur District

Sri Sathya Sai Baba has established the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning where a value-oriented education system is provided free of cost from the first standard to doctorate level in various disciplines. Baba has also established a state-of-the-art medical hospital where the latest sophisticated treatment is provided, totally free of cost. Baba has now taken up a major water supply project in Anantapur district to provide pure, fluoride-free water for the people living in villages and towns. The project serves about 1,000 villages and a population of about eight lakhs [800,000].

The design of various schemes in the project has been so drawn as to provide for the anticipated increase in the population for the next two decades. . . .

These schemes are being implemented under the auspices of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust out of its own funds. It has been proposed that the project shall be completed before November 1995.

The schemes covered by the project broadly fall into four categories: infiltration wells, direct pumping from dams, summer storage tanks and utilizing ground water.

. . . This is probably the first time in the history of the country that a charitable trust has taken upon itself such a herculean task. The drinking water project will be completing all its operations before Sri Baba's 70th birthday on November 23, 1995.

Excerpted from *The Hindu* newspaper
May 7, 1995

Ashram Procedures

When you arrive at Prasanthi Nilayam, **the first thing to do is to go to the Public Relations Office with your passport and visa.** The volunteers will make note of the information and give you a slip of paper to take next door to the Accommodations Office.

If it is festival time or a time when the ashram is crowded, you may be given accommodations in one of the sheds. During less crowded times, you may be given accommodations in a room, usually with three other people. That room has been allotted to someone who is absent and who may have stored their belongings in the locked kitchen. You may use the room temporarily and should report any problems to the Maintenance Cell of the Accommodations Office.

You must return to the Public Relations Office every ten days with your credentials to renew your slip of paper. At that time, you will need to pay a small fee at the Accommodations Office.

A room is usually 40 to 75 rupees a day [about \$1.25 to \$2.50], divided among the four occupants. All four must go to the office together every ten days for renewal. If you are staying in a shed, you pay 5 rupees a day to renew. [The fee defrays the expenses of water and electricity]. Generally, after sixty days there are no more renewals.

Some devotees would rather stay in the sheds. The newer sheds have mosquito netting on the windows and doors, fans, western toilets and wash basins. Besides, if you want to be alone with your own thoughts, it's more anonymous in the sheds. But preference is not a question,

as we must do exactly what the volunteers in the office ask us to do [please understand that they have a very difficult job, especially at festival times]. Real problems will be listened to, but because of language and cultural differences, arguments and endless discussions are pointless. It is better to simply adjust.

Swami says that we make a mistake when we try to change His creation. It is better to search out our own faults and change ourselves.

Living in a small room with three strangers can be difficult. It is a learning process, and we are learning about ourselves. Compromise is always necessary. Some will want the fan on and the windows open, others will not. "*Give and take, give and take,*" is what Swami calls it, and it might be part of Baba's training course to transform our hearts.

The rules of the ashram must be followed: lights out at 9:00 PM, no mixing of men and women, be careful of your valuables (lockers are available in the Public Relations Office for people in the sheds), no drugs or alcohol or meat, do not use electrical appliances which might blow old wiring, and use earphones when listening to tape recorders. To make the best use of your time with Baba, socializing should be limited.

Living inside the ashram is excellent training for spiritual life: simple living, pure thinking, sublimation of ego and desires. You may go there to merge with the Timeless Absolute, but purification of the lower impulses comes first.

Overseas Observer, June 1995
Susan Caffery, Editor

Sai's Message

Ageless Lessons

*By mere empty words,
you can't get the experience of
Sat-chit-ananda.*
Without planting seeds in the ground,
you can't harvest the crop.
Open your eyes and see the blissful
Sai Deva.**
They say He was in Shirdi in the past
and now in Parthi.
Truly speaking, He is present in the
eyes of all who have true
devotion and feeling.*

God's Love

God's love descends equally on all people. A fragrant flower retains its fragrance whether you hold it in the right hand or the left hand. For God, there is not one person who is dear and one person who is not dear. People understand God in the context of their own nature. People with worldly knowledge can never understand divine glory. A person dealing with fish cannot understand the value of diamonds. Whatever you think and feel, that you become.

With an ax, you can cut a sandalwood tree, and it will give fragrance to the ax without any complaints or criticism. Divinity is just like that. People may talk ill of God because of ignorance, pride or vanity. They might even think that they can hurt God by their comments. However, God confers good and sacred qualities even on such unworthy people.

Good and bad are the two sides of everything.

Understanding Duality

In ancient times, citizens of Ayodhya had a great deal of respect, love and devotion for Lord Rama. But when Lord Rama left Ayodhya to go to the forest and did not oblige them by staying back in spite of their repeated prayers and requests, they were angry and used harsh words. They said, "We thought you were a man of compassion and had a sweet, soft nature. We did not know that you had a hard and stony heart." That was the obverse of praise. Everything has two aspects or duality: praise and blame, good and bad, profit and loss.

Both theists and atheists, as well as good and bad people give trouble to God. How can Sai say that? Separation from good people and friendship with bad causes sorrow. Thus, both cause sorrow. The Divine blesses both. What is the inner meaning of that? It is that God blesses by saying, "May you not have friendship with bad; may you not have separation from good." So, it is important spiritual practice to develop friendship with good and staying away from bad. Nectar and poison emerge from the same ocean. Nectar gives joy; poison gives pain. Nectar has a good name, poison has a bad name. You have to develop qualities which give you a good name.

*Sat-chit-ananda means being, awareness and bliss, respectively.

**Deva is a divine entity or holy being.

People do not want the fruits of bad actions, but today they indulge in bad actions. They want the fruits of good actions, but they do not do good deeds. If you aspire for good merits, do good deeds. In most human beings, there is a mixture of good and bad. The crow eats bitter leaves, and the cuckoo eats tender, sweet leaves. Some people go after transient, worldly pleasures and enjoy them. However, good people aspire for the love and grace of God with intensity. In a worldly sense, the good people suffer and encounter difficulties. There is always a mixture of good and bad. For example: The ocean which gives pearls is also full of salt. Good and bad are not inherent in objects, but they are elemental to one's feelings. If you want to enjoy life, fill yourself with good thoughts. Develop love. You can develop love by giving and forgiving. Getting and forgetting enhances selfishness. Ingratitude makes you selfish. If you want to develop love, develop forbearance and charitable giving.

Throw Out Bad Thoughts

Students! At this young age, you are not attaching proper value to human life. Human life is sacred, divine and valuable and has to be experienced thus. We get disgusted and disappointed with life because of our selfishness. There are so many things to learn in life, but take care not to have any dirt in the mind. Drive away all bad thoughts from your mind.

Dakshinamurthi, a great sage, conveyed spirituality by his looks, without any words. While traveling, he came to the ocean's shore and heard *Omkar* (the sound of Om) in the sound of the sea.

**vibuthi* is holy ash, but it is also a symbol of detachment, and it increases one's spiritual splendor.

Waves give beauty to the ocean. The scriptures say, "The lotus gives beauty to a pond, houses make a village beautiful, the moon makes the sky beautiful, waves make the ocean beautiful, virtue makes man beautiful, *vibuthi** gives beauty to devotees." It is the ocean which shows the dignity and grandeur of God. Worldly life is compared to the ocean. Just as you see waves flowing one after the other, sorrows, problems and difficulties come one after the other.

Dakshinamurthi learned a great lesson from the ocean. He noticed that as soon as some rubbish fell into the ocean, it threw the rubbish out onto the shore by a series of waves without retaining the rubbish even for a brief moment. Dakshinamurthi questioned the ocean, "How selfish you are. You are boundless and fathomless, so can't you make some space for this poor stuff? Because of your vastness, it is highly selfish on your part not to tolerate these things." The ocean gave a nice reply. "Lord, there is nothing that is not known to you. If today I allow this piece of dirt to remain with me, before long I will be filled with it, and my entire form will be changed. I can maintain my purity by throwing out any dirt and polluted objects from the very beginning."

Likewise, every person should throw out even the smallest bad thought the moment it seeks to enter the mind. To consider it as small or trivial would mean allowing such things to enter the mind and, in due course, fill it entirely. In that process, the entire nature of a person is changed. His human essence is undermined. Hence, every effort must be made

to keep out all bad thoughts and feelings, and to promote human qualities as much as possible.

Through very little effort, great things can be accomplished. A huge serpent can be destroyed by a large number of small ants. Do not consider yourself insignificant. Seek to acquire the strength and determination to carry out your duties. In the world, difficulties crop up, like jealousy toward others. Crows laugh at the cuckoos, and cranes jeer at the swans. But neither the cuckoo nor the swan is worried. The world has many such envious beings. Do not allow yourself to be overwhelmed by such experiences. You have to confront them boldly, stand up for truth and achieve victory.

God Does Not Punish

Everybody wants peace and happiness, but how do you get peace and happiness? You get this only by controlling the mind. You get this by close proximity to the Divine. A beautiful answer was given in the scripture of the *Bhagavad Gita*, when the seeker wanted to know how to get peace, happiness and victory. The answer was, "Wherever Lord Krishna and Partha (son of Prithvi, earth) live together, there you get peace, happiness and victory." Thus, when a person lives close to God, one attains everything. Establish God in your heart. People want to know where God exists, and the answer is in your daily prayers.

The students say the food prayer, *Brahmarpanam*, which means they are offering food to God. Then God replies, "*Aham Vaishwanara*" which means He resides as digestive fire in embodied souls and digests the food. If the digestive system doesn't work, what happens

to the food we eat? It is God who has given the digestive system and is responsible for the life and death of the human being. Foolish people can't recognize this truth. A person can kill a being, but who except God can give life?

Everything happens by the will of God, but people do not have trust and faith in that. If they don't have faith, they will not have happiness. So, develop faith. God does not have likes and dislikes, and He does not show anger or special grace. For example: Iron cannot move, but if there is a magnet, iron moves in whichever direction the magnet moves. It is the power of the magnet which makes the iron move.

Recognize these two principles: People should derive good from God and enjoy it. God does not punish. People punish themselves depending upon their own actions. Remember, the ax cuts the sandalwood tree, and still the sandalwood tree gives fragrance and it does not hate or criticize the ax. The ax suffers from its own deeds. When it gets blunt, it is put in the fire and hit by a hammer. God doesn't do anything bad. People do it on their own. The goldsmith puts valuable gold in the crucible. Gold enjoys saying, "I am getting purified by this process, and my value is going up." It says to the goldsmith, "You are giving me pain, but I am getting purer and more valuable. In the process, the smoke hurts your eyes, and the sparks and ash dirty your clothes."

God does not punish or reward, He is only a witness. If you turn on a switch, you get light and breeze from the fan. If the switch is off, it is dark and there is no breeze. The switch doesn't care what you do. You create your own sorrows and

joys. God is the support and sustenance of all. Instead of giving importance to the support, you give importance to the body which is the supported. Thus, you get infatuated and get into trouble.

People think that they enjoy sense objects. But in fact, objects enjoy them. Indulging in pleasures of the senses turns people into weaklings. They get diseases and grow old earlier by such indulgence. Worldly enjoyments are not permanent. There is suffering from birth to death. You may have worldly enjoyments, but you should always have God as your aim and goal of life. Lead your life with divine thoughts. When you live like that, you achieve victory in all of life's endeavors.

What is Most Important?

By spending your time sharing your divine experiences, you help others. For that reason, read good books and scripture. Everyday, two students should come and talk about their transformation, share their experiences and divine ideas. Sai is starting this series of talks today. You spend 23 hours in worldly pursuits; you should at least spend one hour a day in spiritual practices. From now on, we will start the meeting at 5:00 PM and go on until 6:00 PM, thus sanctifying life and spending time in the company of the good and godly (*satsang*).

[Some of the college students spoke, and then Baba continued His discourse.]

The first speaker said that reflecting on the name of God and singing the glories of God, would give you happiness and take you across the ocean of life (*samsara*). Another student said that very few people recognized the importance of repeating God's name which is

valuable like a gem. Others consider it as mere words. Repetition of God's name is essential. It is a great mistake if you take it lightly. You can achieve anything with the help of the name. Even the form of God can be attained by the name.

If you want to purchase an object, you need money. Most objects can be purchased with the help of money. Is money greater or are objects greater? Money is greater because with its help the objects can be purchased. Similarly, if you want to acquire joy and happiness, acquire the wealth of the name of the Lord.

Virtue and character are most important characteristics for students. A small example: Life can be compared to a tree. Friends and relatives are the branches, thoughts are the flowers, happiness is the fruit. In the fruit there is the juice of character. However, the basis of all this is the roots. You call a tree a tree when it has roots and fruit, otherwise, it is firewood. Birds in the tree are like lust, danger, greed and jealousy. These birds make dirty below by their droppings, and they cause noise and agitation at the top, resulting in lack of peace. When we want to drive away those birds, we go under the tree and make loud noises by shouting and clapping, and then all the birds fly away.

Sing with Fervor

Sing the names of Rama, Krishna, Jesus with a full heart, and all these feelings—anger, hatred and jealousy—will fly away. This purifies thoughts, words and deeds. This is called *trikarana suddhi* (purification of body, mind and speech) in Vedanta. When the Lord's name appears in the mind, the words of the song come out, and then the clapping goes



"Do not ignore the divine name."

along with it. Singing is the *raga* (melody), mind is the *sruthi* (tune), and clapping is the *thala* (rhythm). These three should go together. Many students think that they should sing silently. That is sheer ignorance. Would you be happy if the food was left in the kitchen and did not get onto the plate and then into your mouth? When you sing, the words should come from the mind and go back through

the ears. You should take this as your food.

People who stray away from the right path lose human values and become weak. Some while singing, move only the lips. That is not correct. When you fall into a deep well, if you mumble, nobody will come to your rescue. If you shout at the top of your voice, people will come to help. Similarly, you should sing loudly. Has God given you the voice to talk about useless things? No! The voice has been given to sing the glories of the Lord with all your energy. When you talk about worldly things, you should talk softly and slowly and should limit your speech. But for singing the glories of the Lord, there is no limit. Sing freely with full energy. Your pronunciation should be clear. Do not mumble the names of God, instead, sing the name loudly with a full heart. You should also recognize that it is not only you, but thousands who are listening to your songs. You enjoy and give joy to thousands, like the street light that gives light, not only to itself, but to the people who walk on the

street. Devotional singing should give joy to you and all others. The leaders must be more careful in this regard than the followers. The lead singer should practice well and realize that thousands are listening.

There are lots of new students here, and I want to tell you that the name of our country is *Bha-ra-th*. *Bha* refers to *bhava* (feelings), *ra* refers to *raga*

(melody), and *th* refers to *thala* (rhythm). You can be justified as students of this country when the feelings, melody and rhythm are in unison.

Group singing is very good. If only one individual sings, it is no good. You get joy when you sing and clap together with similar devotional feelings in your hearts. Singing in harmony gives pleasure to the ears. If each one sings in his own way it causes pain to the ears. All students should attain divinity by chanting the glories of God and singing *bhajans*. Whatever you think, you become that. Put your heart and soul into chanting the name with love.

Our Environment

All the wrong thoughts come because of bad environment. The air we breathe is everywhere, and a lot of bad words are mixed with the air. When we breathe such air, bad thoughts come into our minds. The kind of smoke we get depends upon the fire. Smoke is responsible for the clouds, and the rain depends upon the clouds. From the rain come the crops, and from the crops come the food. The mind is made up of food. Thus, our thoughts are spoiled by the polluted air. So too, there are radio frequencies and sound waves all around us broadcasting from radio stations. All the useless songs and sounds merge in the air. With the excuse of marriage, people play useless songs on the radio. That causes pollution of the air. *Namasmarana* (saying the Lord's name) is a way to purify the air. But, by singing or saying the name of the Lord, you can become purified. Meaningless songs are also played on tape recorders. However, if you chant

the names of Rama, Krishna, Jesus, you will have sacred thoughts.

Of Great Significance

You should realize that whatever Swami wills and plans to do has a lot of significance behind it. You may not understand this now, but gradually with time, you will understand.

Do not ignore the divine name, have faith. There are many atrocities committed nowadays because of lack of purity. There are educated people in the world, but they do not have purity and sense control. I told you the other day that Ravana, a demon, mastered 64 types of art and scripture, and that Lord Rama mastered only 34. So, Ravana was more educated than Rama. What was the difference between them? Rama was a man of wisdom, and Ravana was ignorant. What is the difference between wisdom and ignorance? Rama had complete control over the senses, and Ravana was a slave to the senses. The wise sage, Valmiki, described Ravana as "foolish" because he was a slave to the senses although he was highly educated and intelligent.

Try to control the senses. If you do not control the senses, they will destroy you, bring you a bad name and spoil humanity. Therefore, have the support of the divine name as a boat, and cross the ocean of life in that boat.

[Then Swami ended the discourse by singing a *bhajan*, "Sing the name of Lord Rama with a heart filled with love." (*"Prema Mudita Manase Kaho Rama, Rama, Ram . . ."*)]

—Sathya Sai Baba

Divine Discourse, June 18, 1989

A D A A D

1. When I call on You, You ans - wer. When I seek You, You are here,
 2. Oth - er peo - ple are not stran - gers: You're the heart be - hind their door,
 3. Thru the a - ges I have wan - dered, lost in sor - row and in fear,
 4. In tears of bliss and sweet sur - rend - er, now I o - pen up the door

E⁷ A D A

1. wait - ing at the door, Sath - ya Sai, A - va - tar
 2. bring - ing love to earth, Sath - ya Sai, A - va - tar
 3. but You were al - ways there, Sath - ya Sai, A - va - tar
 4. and find You in my heart, Sath - ya Sai, A - va - tar

CHORUS

A D C[#]m A

You are wis - dom, You are truth; You are the shin - ing door that o - pens

E⁷ A

in my heart.

—Words by Freda Quenneville
 —Music by Phyllis Roberts

Bhajan (devotional singing) is one of the processes by which you can train the mind to expand into eternal ideals.

—Sathya Sai Baba
 S.S.S.B. Center of Korea Newstetter, June 1992

This music was reproduced incorrectly in the last issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter*, USA, Summer 1995. This is the corrected copy. Our apologies to all concerned.

—Editor

Divine Mother and Father in Kodai

In this age of materialism, change and declining values, the job of being a parent is sometimes frustrating, stressful, thankless and overwhelming. We wonder if what we say about Sai and His teachings is ever being heard, or if our example of sacrifice is being seen and understood by our children. Also, is the noise of our restless and valueless society too powerful and attractive to the eyes and ears of our children?

Swami said in Kodai, *"Children have no respect for parents. They are selfish, selfish, selfish. Ask your child, 'Where from did you come? How could you even exist if it were not for your parents?' The children today think I, I, I. They have no fear of sin, no morality, no compassion, no gratitude."*

Our children may not be listening, BUT GOD IS! He knows the effort we make and the obstacles to overcome. One evening in Kodai, Swami honored the householders with a beautiful statement.

He was asked, "Swami, are there any serious yogis in the Himalayan Mountains?" Sai answered, *"Yes, there are some."* The questioner continued, "Are there any in the rest of the world?" "Yes," said Swami, *"but householders are my real sadhakas (spiritual aspirants). They do much better! They even arise early and meditate in the morning."*

Our Mother Sai and Father Sai is the ideal example of parenting. It was a joy to observe the incredible love and sweetness that He gave to the students on their trip to Kodaikanal.

Everything Swami does teaches us a lesson. The first thing that happened was

the selection of 28 students. These fortunate souls would spend their summer vacation with Sathya Sai Baba. Since there would be no earthly parents present, Swami was their guardian.

The act of selecting students and good companions for them, was an example of His words. *"Tell me your company; I'll tell you what you are. You will change when you are with good people. Good company is necessary to have good children."* Swami is telling us that it is crucial for parents to select the companions for their children, even when they become teenagers.

Before the journey began, Swami called the boys into an interview to inform them about the trip. He told them what they would need and gave them the responsibility to prepare.

He said in a discourse one evening, *"The atmosphere in Prasanthi is different. It's very hot, wear thin clothing. In Kodai it is cool, you must wear a sweater. It is your mistake if you are not prepared. It is the same with the outside world. It is bad, and you must prepare yourselves."*

During the bus trip to Kodaikanal it was very hot. One of the students took a piece of cardboard to fan our Lord Sai. Baba refused the fan and told them, *"I suffer what you suffer."* How consistent that statement is with parenting. We too, suffer when our children are sick, angry or unhappy. It's the role of a parent.

When they reached Swami's house in Kodaikanal, the boys got to sleep near Swami's room. He was like a mother who is awakened the moment her child is

sick or restless. When a student was coughing, it was Swami who gave him something to relieve the cough. Parenting is a job that calls for 24 hours of attention, day and night.

When the students came to eat their meals, Swami walked among them checking to see that they had everything they needed, constantly making sure they had enough food and drink. He was thinking only of them, not of Himself.

Sai said, *"Actions should be selfless—taken for the sake of action—not for the results of action. Action is not great unless it is offered as selfless service."* In parenting, we have unlimited opportunities to practice selfless service to the members of our households as Sai, the Divine Mother and Father, did in each and every circumstance.

The students were kept busy every waking hour. Swami believes that if His students are kept busy there is less time for distractions of the mind. They had prayers, *bhajans*, *darshan*, talks with and about Swami, nightly stories of saints and sages, and let's not forget the chores. The students took turns helping in the dining hall.

There were also daily outings of horseback riding, boating, sight-seeing, picnics, picture taking and walks. Sai Baba was such an involved parent. It didn't seem to make any difference how much company our Sai Parent had on His front lawn or guests in His living room. The children came first. His example spoke strongly of parental supervision and involvement. Keep the kids constructively busy.

In the evenings, our dear Father told

stories of saints and sages. *"No television here,"* says the Divine Father. He precluded His talks with asking students to talk or sing. He wanted them to have self-confidence, and He allowed them to practice in His divine presence, as He guided and corrected them.

Swami said, *"Practice is effort made. It is a skill no different from learning to walk, talk, write, etc. We must practice spiritual skills as well."*

Swami told the students, *"Fathers want their children to earn a good name for the family, to uphold righteousness, have humility, obedience, and discrimination. This makes fathers happy, not their birth."*

He also spoke about their mothers. *"Students must realize that the mother is greater than God because she sacrificed her life and gave her body for their birth. If you cannot love and give to your mother what she wants or likes, how can you ever love a formless God?"*

The last night together, everyone's heart was already heavy. They were feeling the loss of Sai's daily presence. The boys sang a song called, *"Oh Maa."* Tears were in everyone's eyes. As the boys near Swami wiped the tears from their eyes, Swami gently slapped a couple on the shoulder and said, *"Don't cry."* But then I saw Swami wipe the corners of His eyes.

Baba said, *"One can be near to the Lord, but not dear to Him."*

One can be far from the Lord and be dear to Him.

The best is to be near and dear to Him."

—Rita Bruce
Tucson, Arizona



Self-Realization Prayer

*Oh Beloved Lord Sai
Whenever I Am loving and kind,
It is really You,
pouring Your love through
this part of Yourself
to bless other parts of Yourself.*

*Oh Beloved Atma,
Whenever I Am wise and have an understanding heart,
It is really You,
expanding Your Divine Mind,
through this aspect of Yourself
to bless other aspects of Yourself.*

*Oh Infinite Universal "I Am,"
Whenever I Am courageous,
and go forward to help the helpless,
It is really You,
moving Your power through this facet of Your Being,
to bless other facets of Your Being.*

*Dear Heavenly Father-Mother God,
I Am simply an outpouring of You!
I now realize that You are my True Self.
Whenever I Am loving, wise and helpful,
it is simply You flowing through me.
I Am You, and You are I.*

*Oh Beloved Lord Sai,
You are expanding through me,
The awareness of Self-Realization!
I am now awakening to the full realization that I Am You!
You are my True Self.
Thank You, Lord Sai.*

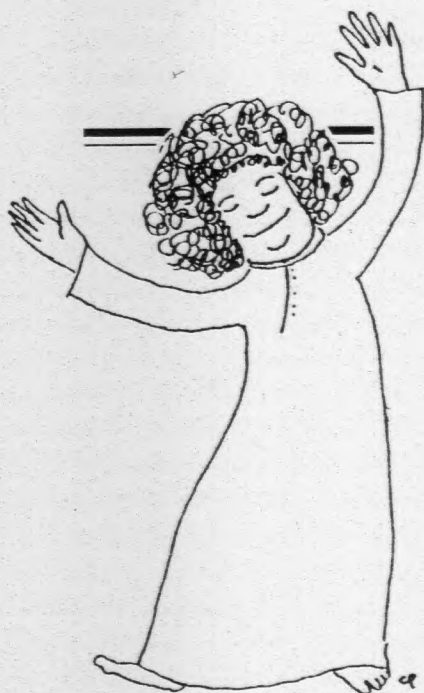
—Bill Gaum
Ashland, Oregon

To achieve self-realization, self-confidence is the most important thing. In all these four attributes—self-confidence, self-satisfaction, self-sacrifice and self-realization—the one common word is "self."

—Sathya Sai Baba
Summer Showers in Brindavan, 1972, pp. 6-7

Children's Corner

Travels With My Swami



My family hasn't traveled to India yet. I know lots of kids in the *Bal Vikas* group who have gone to India. They talk about everything like the weather, the food, the kids who live there, and of course, Swami. Some of them have had interviews. Some have been really close to Baba in *darshan* and some have gotten presents or candy from Baba.

I don't know exactly why we haven't gone. I think it costs too much to travel. But when my friends ask why we don't go, I say that it's up to my parents to decide when we'll go. At first, I was a little jealous of the other kids being able to go and some of them have gone a whole bunch of times. But then, I discovered something really amazing. . . .

Wherever I go, Swami is there. Sure, His body may not be visible to the eye, but His love is visible in everything, everywhere and at all times. I don't have to go to India to see Baba, He's right here with me all the time. I take Baba home after school, to the park, to music class, to dinner—He's with me always. And it sure comes in handy to know He's there. He looks out for me when tough guys come up to me on my way to school and want to fight. He's there when I pray. He's there for each thing I do.

I know He's there when I look into the eyes of a beautiful animal at the zoo. I know He's there when we go to the service project and feel the handshakes of the family we brought food to. When I play the piano and the sounds ring with joy, He's there. He has never picked a place *not* to go with me. It sure helps to have Him at the dentist's office, too. You just have to remember, He's there and you're never alone.

In all my travels, in all my life, Baba will be there. Whether I'm in India or New Hampshire, Baba goes wherever I go. He also goes with you, too! Don't forget to look for Him.



—A Young Devotee
Some Place in New Hampshire

Bhajan Bliss

For the first time, last year, our Sai Center decided to hold *Akhand Bhajan* (singing devotional songs to God for world peace and unity) for the full 24 hours. This was due in no small measure to the generous offer of a member's home for that purpose. To begin with, the decision was a timorous one. There were considerations about routines and busy schedules, children and jobs. Some of us were determined to give it our best effort, no matter what. We felt that we would have help from Baba. What gave us that conviction was Baba's quote: "*The vibrations resulting from singing the glory of God can cleanse the atmosphere and render it pure, calm and ennobling.*" It was with this high purpose in view that the program of global *sankirtan* (singing the Lord's glory) was designed.

Knowing that many members could not participate for the whole time—due to various responsibilities or physical difficulties—the invitation was made, so that anyone could come at anytime to share in this happy experience. The announcement also included an invitation to bring along a blanket and pillow, so that a few winks could be caught to tide one through. Arrangements were made for snacks, and wholesome fare to bolster us physically. So, at 6:00 PM on Saturday, November 12, 1994 we began.

Akhand Bhajan was the single greatest activity, not counting going to India, that I've experienced in a long while. So much seemed to come from it, and who knows what was gained or what was given? We may never understand or even be aware of that. One amazing

thing for me was that I felt thoroughly ill and wretched on Saturday, so much so, that I thought I would not be able to attend. Yet, there was no way that I was going to miss it.

By 7:00 PM, many people had come, and the singing generated love that was almost palpable. This large group stayed until almost midnight. Throughout the night and early morning hours, center members were coming and going. The singing often reached such animation that the faces of the singers were shining with love and joy. Around 5:00 in the morning, one of the group asked if we would like to share in the recitation of *Gayatri Mantra*, 54 times. What an added joy that was.

Later, I came out of a deep reverie hearing a lovely, angelic sounding voice which I couldn't quite recognize. The voice was accompanied by the most beautiful guitar music. I could hear the other voices becoming stronger and livelier as the presence of this new arrival gave our little group a lift. We continued to sing.

That same day, we went to our center's weekly service project singing all the way, even as we walked up the sidewalk and into the building. It was the most thrilling feeling to be singing out like that to God.

Some were a bit taken aback by our public display, though only Sai Center members were present inside the building. However, as we continued to play music and sing softly while we worked preparing lunches for the homeless, the others began to join in. By the end of the

project, some were singing with great gusto. We were so caught up in the enthusiasm of singing to our beloved Sathya Sai Baba.

Someone said we didn't look like we'd been up all night. I replied, "Only with Baba's help."

At the end of the service project, back we went to the house—we sang and sang! Someone had to leave at 5:30 in the evening, so our group was down to only four people. We chose the songs we would close with, especially—"Sai on Earth, Peace on Earth." As we continued to sing, our voices were flagging, but one of our group whipped up the energy, calling on us to, "Sing out with fervor to God." And by the time we concluded with the singing of *Arati*, we were filled with energy and love. Our four small voices sounded like many voices. At 6:00 o'clock Sunday evening, we felt a great close-

ness and joy at having done this thing, together, for our world.

Afterwards, I commented somewhat timidly on the angelic voices I had heard. Yes, the others had also heard the celestial voices! It was like *devas* had joined us and were pouring out devotion.

The next morning, each of us went to work feeling energetic and still filled with love. Wonder of wonders, after singing for nearly 24 hours, not one of us was even hoarse! And, I feel certain that each of the others did as I did that day—sat and marveled at the experience, expressed heartfelt gratitude for having been able to take part in this lovely event, and thought how we might make next year's *Akhanda Bhajan* even more wonderful. As for me, I wondered how we could wait that long.

—Diana Boynton
Tucson, Arizona

As always, the Global *Akhanda Bhajan* will be held under the auspices of the Sathya Sai Baba Centers around the world during a 24-hour period in November. This confirms that somewhere on the face of the earth, Sai devotees are singing devotional songs for world peace and unity. In the U.S., check with your local Sai Center for the location and other details.

If there is not a center nearby, many devotees drive long distances to attend the annual *Akhanda Bhajan*. Another alternative is to have a *bhajan* in your home with family or even alone. If one cannot join any of the *bhajan* groups, devotional songs can always be played on a tape recorder, so that one may participate in this elevating experience.

This year, the *Akhanda Bhajan* will be observed starting **Saturday, November 4, at 6:00 PM, and will conclude on Sunday, November 5, at 6:00 PM.** Please note that it is not necessary to attend for the full 24-hour period.

—Editor
Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

Announcements

For Travelers

Please be aware that there will be regularly scheduled **Indian Airlines flights—between Bombay and Puttaparthi, and between Madras and Puttaparthi—**beginning July 31, and continuing until December 31. Indian Airlines made this announcement July 1, and this information should be available to all travel agents.

Polish Translators Needed

The recently established Polish Sai Organization seeks help from qualified people to **translate from English into Polish** to bring Sai literature to Polish devotees and would-be devotees. If you can help in this wonderful service, contact:

Mr. Matt Sliwowski
180 Thompson St. #2 E
New York, NY 10012
phone (212) 260-3024

or

Mr. Marek Oziwicz
53-343 Wroclaw
ul. Komandorska 44/8
Poland
phone (011-48-71) 67-84-14

U.S. Regional Meetings

As our readers may know, all the Regional Meetings for the Sathya Sai Organization of the United States have been successfully concluded. In California, President of the Sathya Sai Baba Central Council, USA, Mr. Dave Lambert, addressed the assembled devotees with a warm greeting, and then introduced Drs. Goldstein and Harvey.

Dr. Michael Goldstein and Dr. William Harvey traveled throughout the nine U.S. regions to discuss the messages that Swami had instructed them to disseminate. Just a few highlights of those messages include: The Water Project which will provide fresh, clean water to some of the parched areas of India—giving up alcohol, cigarettes and meat—love all, serve all—love even those who are cruel—overcoming our own shortcomings—Baba's quotations, "*Spirituality is a very easy path; God is the doer, so surrender to God*"—"*There is no greater joy than spiritual understanding*"—"*Talking about God is prayer*"—"*Thinking about God is darshan.*"

The essence of the message seemed to be that **Swami has raised the spiritual intensity level in each of us. He expects more and more from us. We must take steps to accelerate our transformation, now!**

Dr. Harvey concluded by reminding us of Baba's simple but profound ABC's: "*Always Be Content,*" "*Always Be Cheerful,*" "*Avoid Bad Company.*"

The second part of the meeting was devoted to discussions with members of individual Sai Centers regarding the challenges, solutions and joys they face. Names had already been submitted from the Sathya Sai Baba Center members for five new regional officers to represent each of the nine regions. The offices are: President,

Vice-President, and Coordinators of Devotion, Education and Service. Results of the selections will be made known at a later date.

New Subscribers to the Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

In the past, all new subscribers have had their subscriptions begin with the current issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*, sent by first-class mail. This enabled their quarterly subscription to begin without delay. Because of financial considerations, **we must now offer the current issue of the Newsletter at a cost of \$2.00 in addition to the subscription fee. If the issue is not in stock, your \$2.00 will be returned.**

Back Issues of the Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA

The *Newsletter* gets many requests for back issues, and we appreciate the interest which is shown. But to those who request them, **please know that we do not have back issues of the Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA in stock.** However, we might be able to provide the current issue, if it is available, at a cost of \$2.00. Same policy as above, the \$2.00 will be refunded if that issue is not available.

Dates for November

Akhandā Bhajan Saturday, November 4 starting at 6:00 PM, continuing through Sunday, November 5 ending at 6:00 PM. Devotional songs are sung by Sai devotees around the world for peace, to heighten the consciousness and purify the atmosphere.

Recognition of the Birthday of Sri Sathya Sai Baba, November 23. Devotees throughout the world are grateful for the opportunity to pay homage to the Avatar for taking human form. We celebrate the birth of the One who has no birthday.

World Council Meeting

The Sixth World Conference of the International Sri Sathya Sai Organization will take place at Prasanthi Nilayam in conjunction with the 70th birthday celebrations. The theme of the World Conference is, "Transformation Through Selfless Love in Thought, Word and Deed." Specific issues to be discussed at the conference are:

1. Is the essence of all religions being reflected in our programs?
2. Is the language and culture of our communities appropriately represented in our programs?
3. Have we developed Sai Organization programs for young adults?
4. Discussion of service programs. How to inspire more members to participate?
5. Have we developed a plan to welcome and provide orientation for the public to our Sai Organization programs?
6. How can we have a greater impact on our respective communities with regards to the propagation of the Divine Message of Sri Sathya Sai Baba?

A Little Goes a Long Way

The following letter was received by the Sathya Sai Book Center of America in response to some books that were sent as an offering to the Sathya Sai Centre of Tuskanac, Zagreb, Croatia. The little that was sent did, indeed, go a very long way! It went all around the world, heart-to-heart.

The letter is signed by Ljubica Ljubic, but on the back of the page (which is not clear enough to publish) there appears to be at least 50 signatures with Oms, Sai Rams, hearts and words of love and gratitude.

—Editor

Sathya Sai Centre, Tuskanac
41000 Zagreb
Ljubica Ljubic
Tuskanac 56 b,
Croatia, Europe
Tel. & Fax. 385 1 / 273-410

April 4, 1995

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Dear Sai Workers of the Sathya Sai Book Center,

You can't imagine how surprised I was when I got three parcels of the wonderful books of our dear teacher, Sri Sathya Sai Baba. We will distribute most of the books at the centre, but we sent already some to the crisis areas. If there is an opportunity, we will try, also, to send some of the books to where the fightings are very bad just now. We would like to tell you how grateful we are to our beloved Lord that He gives us, through such signs of love, the feelings that we are not alone, and that we are not forgotten.

When I asked Swami, during the interview, what we can do to stop the war, He said, *"It is very, very, difficult because the wars have been going on at these places for hundreds of years. You can only turn the people toward the Divine."*

Your books will help us to do it in the way Swami told us to do it. We thank you so much for all you have done and are doing for us.

In Sai's love and service
—Ljubica Ljubic



Man has thrown his humanness into the crater of cruelty, forgetting his best interests under the influence of hatred, envy, conceit and power. He has cast aside the expansiveness of his culture. As a result, peace has flown from the heart of man, from the fold of society and the boundaries of nations.

—Sathya Sai Baba
Voice of the Avatar, Part II, p. 11

Awareness is life. The difficulties which come and go are like passing clouds. You should not worry unduly about them. By worrying about these things, you waste time. During times of trouble and worry, think about God. Then, the mind acquires peace; you acquire peace of mind. People come here and say, "I want peace of mind, I want peace." In the sentence—I want peace—how many words are there? There are three words. "I" is ego, "want" is desire. Remove ego and desire and you have "peace." Because you develop ego and desire, you have no peace.

In this world, there is no peace. Peace is an internal feeling. Outside it's only pieces, pieces, pieces. There is division. Therefore, you must try to live in your heart with peace, bliss and silence. The proper study of mankind is man. Thoughts, words, and actions together make man. Today, thoughts are in one direction, words are in another direction, and actions are in yet another direction. Therefore, there is no integral humanness, no code of conduct.

Manners, Dress, Health and Cleanliness

You must develop manners. We are living in the world, in society. Therefore, we should behave in a way which is not offensive to society. When you are in your own country, you behave according to the laws and customs of your country, and no one is offended. But when you are in India, you need to be very careful about your conduct.

The first requirement is proper dress. Many of you are coming here dressed in what we regard as an unbecoming manner. Many are walking about

in very short clothing, even dirty clothing. Such persons do not look like gentlemen to us, but like beggars. If the clothes are dirty, how can the mind be clean? You should wear the kind of dress which will develop your character. Here you should dress in accordance with the customs of India. You should come and represent your country well. Do not soil the name of your country. Cover the entire body. Be careful about the dress you wear. This helps you to keep yourself healthy and to develop a healthy mind.

The next requirement is that you keep your mouth very clean. Because the mouth is the main entrance for food, clean your teeth properly and wash your mouth properly. No foul smell should come from a person's mouth. If the mouth is not clean, the health is not good. When the health is bad and the stomach is not working right, even your divine practices cannot be proper. Even for righteousness and truth, health is very important. When it comes to attaining success in spiritual pursuits, health is the most important thing. Without good health, you cannot pursue proper spiritual discipline and gain God's grace.

Mental cleanliness is as important as physical cleanliness. Both are important. Cleanliness is the first requirement for a spiritual life. The second is respectable dress. The third requirement is good character. And the fourth is silence. The mansion of spirituality is built on these four pillars.

A Wandering Mind

Don't go about outside [the ashram] too much. By going around outside, the mind also goes around and around.

What is the meaning of meditation? It means a steady mind. When the body is kept steady, the mind is also kept steady. The body is like a pot. The mind is like the water in the pot. If the body is unsteady, the mind is also unsteady. If the pot shakes, the water in it also shakes. Similarly, if the body shakes, the mind is agitated. So, if the body goes wandering around, the mind also goes wandering around. It is to steady the mind that you sit in meditation. Do not wander around aimlessly. Do not have wrong thoughts. Wrong thoughts, improper looks, improper speech, or improper hearing, all these things should be given up. Replace them with love.

Benefit from Coming

Having come to India at great expense, you must go back with good habits and the spiritual truths that you have developed here. Only then will there be some gain, some benefit from your having come to this country. Having spent so much money and time in coming here, if you develop good thoughts, good habits, and good qualities, the trip will benefit you. Concern yourselves with developing a relationship with Swami and do not go around developing relationships with others. You have come here, leaving behind your family and friends. Why should you cultivate new relationships here? The relationship which should develop is between you and God.

Now, this does not mean that you should slight anybody or develop hatred for anybody. But it should just be, "Hello. Hello." "How are you? How are you?" "Good-bye. Good-bye." The relationships developed should be kept to a minimum. You must each be alone and

develop your spiritual qualities. If you associate with others, then preferences will start. If you wear two bangles, they will make a noise. If you wear only one bangle, there will be no noise. If you remain alone, then your mind will be at peace. When you associate with two or three other persons, the noise will become great and there will be no peace.

Do not come here and develop new relationships with others. You come alone, then you develop a relationship with another. After a few weeks, you start to think of marriage. But if your objective was to get married, you need not have come all the way over here. Having come, you should value the sacredness of the divine and not seek to acquire more bondage. Work to develop freedom from bondage. Work for liberation, and do not waste your time developing other kinds of relationships.

Manners, discipline and proper behavior are the most important things when you are here. While here, in your room or outside, don't engage in unnecessary talk.

Correct Currency

There are other things that shouldn't be happening. I shall give you a good example: You have plenty of money. For something that is worth only one rupee, sometimes you give ten rupees. Ten rupees may not mean much to you, but for the local people it is a large amount. You are staying here just temporarily. After you leave, having paid these large amounts for things, you are making life difficult for the permanent residents. So, when you pay too much for an item, do not imagine that you are doing some service. You are really doing harm. Don't

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“You must understand why you have come.”

waste your money. If you keep this advice in mind, you will have plenty of money, and you will progress spiritually.

Conclusion

The important thing is discipline. You have come to acquire devotion to God. Therefore, develop this *bhakti*, this devotion. If you develop it, then Swami says, “I am yours, and you are mine.”

There is another thing you may have noticed about the people I call for an interview. The students are sitting on the veranda, and they will form the wrong opinions if you have come here dressed inappropriately. This is the reason I do not give some people an interview. Dress properly and I may call you.

Otherwise, the students develop a poor attitude about the countries from which people come. When you are at home, you wear short clothing, etc., but when you come for an interview with Swami, you must dress as a respected visitor. Then others will respect your country. I know your mind and why you have come, but others judge only from your appearance and your conduct. When you come to Prasanthi Nilayam, you must have good manners, modest dress and appropriate behavior. Not only that, but when you have learned this behavior and go back to your country, you will be able to teach others. If you earn respect here, wherever you go you will earn respect.

—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA, Fall 1984

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—Sathya Sai Baba

Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA, Fall 1984

Sathya Sai Book Center of America
305 West First Street, Tustin, California 92680, USA
Phone: (714) 669-0522 or Fax: (714) 669-9138

Revised Editions Now Available

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume I

Volume I has been revised and now has larger type for easier reading. Most of the Sanskrit words have a translation in parentheses, and the book features a glossary.

223 pages

\$4.20

Sathya Sai Speaks, Volume XV

This book of Sai Baba's discourses given during 1981-82, is now available in the USA. It also has enlarged type and translations of foreign words.

368 pages

\$5.60

Gayatri Cassette Tape

Sai Repeats the Gayatri Mantra

In the last issue of the *Sathya Sai Newsletter, USA*, we failed to mention the *Gayatri Mantra* cassette with Baba doing the mantra. (How could we have done that?!) Please know that it is available at the Book Center.

C-049

\$2.50

Free Catalog/Price List

The Book Center has a new catalog/price list which will make ordering easier and shipping faster. It is available, free, upon request from the Sathya Sai Book Center.

Classics By and About Sai Baba

These four volumes by Prof. N. Kasturi make up Baba's biography through 1979, originally entitled, *Sathyam-Sivam-Sundaram*, now entitled, *Sathya Sai Baba*.

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The Vahinis A series of books written by Sathya Sai Baba. This collection of volumes contains the wisdom that has prevailed throughout the ages.

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